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The
poets and Dramatists
OF
Ireland.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION ON THE EARLY RELIGION AND
LITERATURE OF THE IRISH PEOPLE.

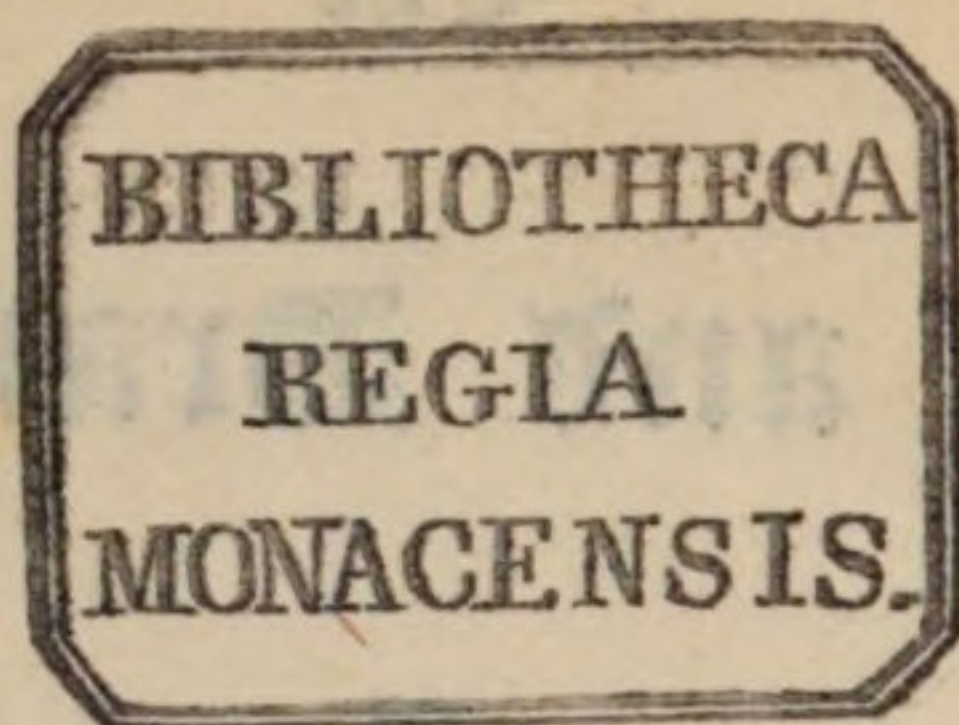
BY DENIS FLORENCE M'CARTHY.

VOL. I.

DUBLIN:
PUBLISHED BY JAMES DUFFY,
10, WELLINGTON QUAY.
LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL AND CO.
STATIONERS' HALL COURT.

1846.

574. D.



Stereotyped and Printed by T. Coldwell, 50, Capel-street.

TO
WILLIAM BRYAN, ESQ.,

RAHENY,

AS AN EXPRESSION OF MY RESPECT AND GRATITUDE

FOR

HIS WORTH AS A MAN,

HIS PATRIOTISM AS AN IRISHMAN,

AND

HIS KINDNESS AS A FRIEND,

I DEDICATE

THIS VOLUME.

D. F. M'CARTHY.

38, Upper Baggot-street.

WILLIAM BRYAN, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

AS AN EVIDENCE OF MY RESPECT AND GRATITUDE

FOR

THE GIFT OF A BOOK

AND PATRONAGE AS AN AUTHOR

AND

FOR THE GIFT OF A BOOK

I HAVE

THE HONOUR

TO SIGN MYSELF

Yours truly,

WILLIAM BRYAN, ESQ.

PREFACE.

IN the year of grace, 1801, this nation, for the first time, sent representatives to the Imperial Parliament. Long before that period, however, (as well as since,) the principles of imperialism had been applied to our literature; and year after year, by our neglect or indifference, (too long the constituencies of Irish genius,) we sent our brightest wits and most inspired poets to the great senate of human intellect, in London.

In that assembly it is some consolation that we were worthily represented. Philosophy and science had their Boyle, their Berkely, their Toland, their Hutcheson, and their Burke. The polished capital of wit, had its Swift, its Sterne; and, since the Union, its Maginn. The rural districts of poetry had their interests protected by a Parnell, a Goldsmith, a Cunningham, and a Boyse. With a liberality not imitated by the Reform Bill, we gave four representatives to the important metropolitan borough of comedy, in the persons of Congreve, Farquhar, Goldsmith, and Sheridan. Tragedy had its Southern and its Ma-

turin. The stage, its Wilks, its Macklin, its Barry, and its O'Neill. Fiction, a Johnston, a Hamilton, a Banim, and a Griffin. Art, its Barry and its Forde ; and, at the present day, in our melody and music, "the member for all Ireland," is unquestionably Thomas Moore, who is the only one of our representatives who has been raised to the Upper House, under the style and dignity of "The Lord of Song!" How they attended to their duties it is unnecessary for us to say : how laboriously they toiled ; how poorly they were requited ; how seldom they were permitted within the golden precincts of the "Treasury ;" how assiduously most of them devoted their energies to wretched journeywork on committees of "Ways and Means ;" all these things can be read in that sad "Mirror" of the Literary Parliament, called "The Lives of the Poets."

What a composite thing, after all, is this so-called *English Literature* ? One of its greatest historians, and two of its greatest novelists are Scotchmen.* "Gulliver's Travels," "The Vicar of Wakefield," and "Tristram Shandy," the three *English* books best known on the continent of Europe, are written by Irishmen—and

* Perhaps *we* could put in a claim for the greatest of all *English* Novelists, FIELDING, as, according to the "Biographia Dramatica," there are grounds for believing that he was born in Capel-street, Dublin.

its greatest lyrists are an Ayrshire peasant and a native of Dublin. If a division should take place—if Walter Scott and Tobias Smollet should pair off, for the remainder of the session, with Oliver Goldsmith and Laurence Sterne—if Toland, or Swift would pair off with Hume; Miss Edgeworth with Miss Porter, Thomas Moore with Robert Burns, “the collective wisdom” of the Imperial Parliament of Letters, it must be confessed, would be sadly diminished. Such an experiment, however unconstitutional, is the object of the present publication. It is an attempt, on a small scale, and in literary matters, to call together a “council of three hundred,” and to see whether the men of intellect who have gone out from amongst us, are sufficient on their own soil to supply the literary wants, and support the dignity of a nation. We have, therefore, by the unlimited powers placed in us, as Editor, been graciously pleased to issue our writs to all Irish Poets and Dramatists, improperly serving as English authors, that they forthwith return home, and that they assemble in Dublin, in the April number of the “Library of Ireland,” there and then to meet for the dispatch of business!

Having thus stated the object of these volumes, it only remains for us to allude to the manner in which we have discharged our duty

as editor, and the principles on which we have acted. Like several of our predecessors in the "Library of Ireland," we have to acknowledge with grief and shame, that we are ignorant of the ancient language of our country. This want has necessarily prevented us from entering at any great length into the most interesting subject of our vernacular literature. We have endeavoured, however, in the "Introduction," without at all attempting an historical narrative, to give some idea of the religious opinions and forms of worship of our pagan ancestors, as well as of their state of literary and general knowledge. To this we have added a rapid sketch of our most eminent early Christian writers, accompanied with translations.

With regard to the Anglo-Irish writers, we are aware that the principle on which we have acted, of claiming, as Irishmen, most English-writing authors, born in this country, is subject to much objection; but it has been adopted, after the most mature deliberation, and on the belief that it was less objectionable than any other course.

The only exception we have made to this rule, is Congreve, and for the reasons stated at the commencement of his memoir. In coming to the conclusion that Congreve was not born in this country, we have solely relied on the genuineness

of the document originally published by Malone, and purporting to be the certificate of his admission to Trinity College. It is right, however, to add that we have not had an opportunity of comparing the copy with the original ; or, indeed, of ascertaining whether the latter is in existence. We have rested on the authority of Malone, who was himself an Irishman, and who would not be likely to fabricate a document that would deprive him of so eminent a countryman. If it be true that Congreve was born in England, he is, notwithstanding, in many respects more Irish than some of the Irish themselves.

It is hard to say whether we gain or lose more by this arrangement—we lose the “Fairy Queen” of Spenser ; and much of Derrick and Raleigh, and Shirley, and many others. On the other hand we retain most of Burke, a good deal of Swift and Goldsmith, and all of Sterne. As an Introduction to the Second Volume, it is our intention, along with giving a sketch of the Irish stage, its theatres and actors, also to take a rapid glance at all the eminent English authors who are in any way connected with Ireland, either by their writings or their lives.

In the Memoirs we have given, it has been our object to mention every fact of importance that we could by any possibility discover, having an Irish or local interest. The same rule has

influenced us in the selection of poetical specimens. We have sometimes passed over pieces of higher literary merit, in order to make room for poems which possess the still greater attraction of being written on important national events, or descriptive of native scenery. No explanation necessary for the understanding of any poem has, we believe, been omitted—and whenever our writers have had the advantage of the highest criticism, we have freely given them the benefit of it.

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INTRODUCTION.

READER! whoever thou mayest be, close thine eyes for a little while on the world which is about thee, and thine ears against the allurements of the present, and let the past with all its wonders and its mystery rise up before thee. Think of that time when the statues of the Parthenon still lay unawakened in the quarries of Pentelicus, and when as yet the wild goat hung giddily from the unlevelled summit of the Capitoline hill!—Think well and long, for thou hast a great spectacle to behold! Art thou prepared?

Now open thine eyes slowly, shading them with the hand as if thou wouldst gaze on the meridian sun, and let the splendour of what thou beholdest shape itself gradually before thee.

Thou seest upon the eastern shores of that beautiful sea whose waters wash the coasts of three continents, a magnificent city, with columns, and arches, and temples, rivalling those of Rome in her most palmy days, and her

capacious harbour crowded with galleys as fantastic and as beautiful as that in which Cleopatra floated down the Nile. It is Tyrus! She that was situate at the entry of the sea! She that was the merchant of the people for many isles!

What can be more magnificent than the description which Ezekiel has left us of the wealth and enterprize of this great nation? The sails of their vessels were of fine linen with brodered work from Egypt. Their masts were cedars of Lebanon, and their oars were made of the oaks of Bashan. The benches of their vessels were of ivory, brought out of the isles of Chittim. Their garments were dyed with blue and purple from the isles of Elishah. Every third year did the navy of Tharsish depart upon its great voyage, laden with the productions of Tyre, its oil, its purple, and its glass, and return home enriched with the treasures of distant lands—their gold, and silver, and ivory; their apes and peacocks; their emeralds, their coral, and their agate.

Boldly did these magnificent mariners steer their fairy vessels—vessels that poets could scarcely have imagined even for the voyages of love himself—not only through the sunny waters of the Mediterranean, but even into the dark and stormy billows of the Atlantic. Passing by the isles of Hieres and the coast of Gaul, from which these indefatigable merchants carried off the

coral of the one, and the fine granite of the other—and landing occasionally to search for valuable minerals in the teeming caverns of the Pyrenees and of the Alps—they pushed boldly into the ocean, and returned home at length enriched with all that the western world could produce; the gold and olives of Iberia, the lead and tin of Ierne and of Britain, and the amber of the Baltic.

These princely merchants then were our first colonizers.

It cannot be supposed that a people so enterprising, so successful, and so civilized, would be content with merely holding a cold and formal intercourse with the nations with whom they traded; and a probability which almost amounts to a certainty arises, that along with the wonderful productions of their skill and industry, and the acquisitions of their commerce, they also introduced their religious worship and such knowledge as they possessed of science and of letters.

It is not our intention upon the present occasion to enter into the arena of Irish antiquities. The dust which the zeal or scepticism of the several combatants has excited, has done little more than to obscure all that was beautiful in our earliest history, and blind the eyes of those who would attempt to penetrate the obscurity. Of all the battle-fields of theory on which the minds of men have combatted, that of ancient

Ireland has been the most contested, and with results the least satisfactory. On that subject every thing has been doubted—every thing disputed—nothing granted. The theories are abundant but the facts are few. Every topic that could interest us, and of which we could be reasonably proud, such as our remote civilization, the comparative perfection of our early literature and legislation—nay, even our knowledge of letters at any period considerably earlier than the introduction of Christianity,—all these topics have been the fertile sources of contention, in which the fondest enthusiasm, or the coldest analysis, the most unhesitating credulity, or the most stubborn scepticism, has each borne its part. The fate of Ireland has certainly been most singular, and in her case spoliation has been carried to an extent unparalleled in the annals of any other nation. Not content with the plunder of the material riches of the country, the insatiable and avaricious hand of robbery has wished to snatch from her the unsubstantial, yet consoling splendours of her traditions. The disenthronement of an O'Connor, or the subjugation of an O'Neill was not enough to satisfy the ambition of her conquerors, but that venerable dynasty of warrior bards and sceptered sages which stretched out spectral-like even to the very dawn of the world, were compelled to abdicate their misty thrones and “fade into the light

of common day." The traditionary fragments of an Irish bard, strung together by modern ingenuity, and offered to the world with matchless intrepidity, gave birth to a Caledonian Homer. The early literature of Scotland was embellished and her shrines enriched with the plundered learning and sanctity of Ierne; and those of our saints who could not be stolen, as in the case of St. Patrick, and St. Bridget, were attempted to be annihilated. In a utilitarian—nay, even in a philosophical point of view, perhaps, it may not be very important at the present day which version of these vexed questions may be the true one. Nations, no more than individuals, should shine with the reflected glory of their ancestors, and men and peoples should rather blush to be the degenerate descendants of illustrious progenitors, than to be the first of their race who emerged from obscurity, and created name, and fame, and fortune for themselves.

The Spanish Grandee, who dissipates his shrunk patrimony in the gambling houses of Seville or Madrid—the Italian patrician who is celebrated only in the purlieus of Naples, are looked on with ten-fold contempt when we recollect the chivalry of old Spain, and the splendours of Rome! If truth, which is above all things, were not in question, it, perhaps, might be as well to let much of our disputed history fall for ever into that oblivion which is daily threatening

to swallow it up, and to start as a new-made nation, fresh from the hand of the Creator, with no inconsistent glare from the past making our present desolation more apparent, but with the enlightenment and necessities of the present and the future alone.

Truth is however above all things, and to our mind no events of equal antiquity are supported by such a mass of authorities as the principal circumstances of that portion of our history to which we allude.

The cherished traditions of a people, however extravagant they may appear, are in every instance valuable sources of information. No matter what amount of error may have been heaped upon them in their downward course through ages—no matter what incrustations may have formed around them—still like the statue in the block of marble the original form of truth is there, and requires only the discriminating hands of the historian to reveal.

It could not be expected that the traditions of the Irish people would differ much in their origin and history from those of other nations. The same original germ of truth is there, well nigh smothered by the luxuriant vegetation of weedy error which usually surrounds it. In our case, however, there is a coherence between the several parts, and a minuteness in the filling up which are remarkable, and which even if unsupported

by external authority would be valuable; but when corroborated even by the most scanty evidence that the earliest foreign literature supplies, become most important. Such corroborative evidence drawn both from Greek and Roman writers, upon many points, particularly upon those referring to the religious character of this country in pagan times, are not wanting. They are valuable as attesting the truth of the local and indigenous traditions of the people, and are sufficiently well known to excuse any more particular allusion to them in this place.

Although this island very early attracted the notice of the Greeks—they themselves had but indistinct ideas on the subject. Such knowledge as they possessed being chiefly derived from the perhaps interestedly erroneous accounts of Phœnician travellers. Herodotus, while mentioning the exportation of tin and lead from these islands, candidly confesses that he knew nothing more upon the subject, and that he failed in meeting with any one who had visited them. In the days of Homer, about 400 years earlier, the existence and condition of the sacred Island was still more shadowy. It was then enveloped in that fascinating obscurity which is so tempting to the poetical imagination, and which rendered it and its girdling waters, according to Strabo and Plutarch, the scene of the *Odyssey*—the latter writer expressly asserting that the island of Calypso was

an island to the west of Britain! From this circumstance and from the Atlantis of Plato it may be inferred that the west was the favourite point to which the Greek imagination loved to turn, as the east has been for centuries the favourite fable land of the Poets, of southern and western Europe, and as the banks of the Rhine are at this day, with the more promising of the American minstrels. This imaginary beauty of the remote—this

Devotion to something afar,
From the sphere of our sorrow,

seems to be natural to the human heart, and to be as warm and vigorous at this moment as in the days of Homer.

The religion of the Celtic Irish appears to have been originally exceedingly pure and simple, and in many respects resembling that of the ancient patriarchs. Considering that any temple reared by human hands, was too confined and limited for the boundless immensity of the one great spirit whom they worshipped, they consecrated to his honour temples, which had no limits but the blue roof of heaven—a circle of ancient oaks, or a still wider boundary of green and sloping hills. In these sacred places they offered victims to him and celebrated some festivals in his honour, and observed a great simplicity in all

their religious rites, during a long succession of ages.*

The priests of this simple and primitive religion were a race of men called Druids, a name familiar to the readers of the ancient histories of Ireland, Gaul and Britain. These men were the repositories of whatever their several countries possessed, of literature, and of science ; and had mastered so much of the mystery of the invisible world, as to impart to the Greeks the first principles of their theology, and the most sublime parts of their philosophy. A remarkable proof of the learning and wisdom to which they had reached, has been presented to us by the Greek writers, in that most interesting account which they have given of *Abaris*, an Irish or British Celtic Druid, who about 600 years before Christ travelled into Greece and then went into Italy, where he became acquainted with Pythagoras. So great has been the idea formed of the acquirements of this sage—the first of that innumerable band of learned and pious missionaries, who from his time to the present hour, have gone out from the bosom of their own island, to the most distant parts of the earth—that some zealous writers assert, that the Greek philosopher received from *Abaris* as much instruction as he gave ! It would appear also that he was as perfect in the

* Universal History, vol. 18, p. 354.

language as the philosophy of Pythagoras. The Greeks themselves asserting that whenever he moved his tongue, you would imagine him to be some one out of the academy or very Lyceum.* Their skill in medicine was not inferior to their knowledge of other sciences; they had various remedies, but the universal *heal all*, as the Druids called it, was the famous misletoe. They believed it planted on the oak by a divine hand, and beheld in the union of the sacred tree, with the everlasting verdure of the misletoe, a living symbol of the doctrine of immortality. The plant was gathered in winter, at the period of its bloom when it is most visible, and when its long green branches, its leaves, and the yellow tufts of its flowers, decking the leafless tree, present the only image of life amidst the death and barrenness of nature.†

In astronomical skill, the Irish Druids, it would appear, surpassed their brethren in Gaul, as is proved by their more correct mode of measuring the year.

This distinguished body of men was divided into two great classes, the sacred and the profane. To the former belonged the duties of contemplation, of worship, and of sacrifice. To the latter the cultivation of the sciences, of poetry and music.

* Carte's Hist. of Eng. 1, 52. Higgins' Celtic Druids, 124, 125.

† Michelet.

To the dignities and privileges of neither was any person of the plebeian class admitted, as it was contrary to the policy of the Celtic, as well as of the ancient Greek tribes, to diffuse a knowledge of the liberal arts and sciences among the people. For instructing youth in those sciences, schools were established in groves and caves in several parts of the island, and it is remarkable that most of the seminaries established by the Christian clergy in the fifth century, were erected on the ruins of these Druidical academies as at Roscarberry, Lismore and Clogher.*

That section of the Druidic order, whose duties consisted in the cultivation of poetry and music, were called Bhardagh or Bards—that is, learned men.

They were a most distinguished and influential class in this country, from the earliest period down to the reign of Charles the First, when the last Bardic or Filean school in Ireland was kept in Tipperary. According to Borlase they were the original Celtic priests, and were so called from their chanting to the deities in their sacred offices.

The utmost care was paid to their education, from 16 to 20 years being devoted to that purpose, at the end of which period, each individual assumed his hereditary rank in one of the three

* Ledwich, 71.

divisions, into which the Bardic profession was divided. Those who professed only music, being called Citharadagh or Clarsacha; those who professed historic poetry and music, obtaining the title of Bards; and those studying only poetry containing their laws, receiving the title of Brehons or judges.

Whether from the peculiar attention bestowed upon the education of the youthful bard—the boundless liberality of the chieftains at whose courts they resided, and in whose trains they followed, or to the natural taste and talent for music of the Irish people, it is certain that the Bards of this country were distinguished for extraordinary skill in this exquisite accomplishment, far beyond those of any other northern or western nation. As in religion and literature, so also in music was Ireland the great central “fire-heart,” whose melodious throbbings were felt not only in the neighbouring islands, but in many of the kingdoms of the Continent; the hills of Cambria and of Caledonia, the fields and cities of Gaul re-echoed with the sweetly plaintive melody of the Irish harp, awakened by the skill and touched by the fingers of Irishmen. So late, says Warton, as the 11th century, the practice continued among the Welch bards of receiving instruction in the bardic profession from Ireland. According to Buchanan, the harpers in Scotland were all Irishmen, and it is

mentioned, that when Pepin founded the abbey of Neville, he sent for Irish musicians. Giraldus Cambrensis, who has praised scarcely anything else connected with this country, peremptorily declares that the Irish, above any other nation, were incomparably skilled in music—*præ omni natione quam vidimus, incomparabiliter est instructa.*

The bards had many privileges—their persons were held sacred even by enemies, for which reason they were sometimes called *Ullagh*, or the Sacred Order. They were permitted to wear six colours in their dress, which was only one less than those worn by persons of princely rank. Like the Chinese literati, they were exempted from taxes and ennobled by right of genius;* and it is stated by Keating, that to seize the estate of a bard, even for the public service, and in time of national distress, was deemed an act of sacrilege.† This extraordinary respect paid to the character of the bards, had not only the effect of bringing their art to the utmost perfection, but of increasing their numbers to such an extraordinary degree, that

* D'Alton.

† In the old Welch laws, also, whoever slightly injured a bard was to be fined six cows and 120 pence. It was also enacted, that whoever shall strike a harper, who can harp in a public assembly, shall compound with him four times more than any other man of the same condition.—*Warton.*

at one period (anno 580) they numbered one third of the men of Ireland. Their wealth and licentiousness augmented in proportion, which led to a variety of measures for their reformation and reduction; until about the reign of Elizabeth, this once illustrious and sacred order sunk into contempt and neglect.* It may be allowed to us, perhaps, as a proud but melancholy boast, that our bards were always on the side of liberty, and against the invader, from the time when clothed in white, with their harps in their hands, they marched at the head of our armies, and thundered the *Rosg-Catha* against the Danes, until their utter extinction long after the Anglo-Norman invasion!

The Irish Druids are represented as wearing a key in the shape of a cross, to shew, says O'Connor, that they alone had the key of the sciences—that is, that they alone could communicate a knowledge of the sciences they preached.†

* The bards and minstrels of Scotland and Wales also incurred the reprehension of government at certain periods.—(*Vide* “Buchanan’s History of Scotland.”) By the laws of Macbeth, a minstrel is to draw the plough instead of an ox.—(Barrington’s Observations on the Statues.) What a degrading sentence! says Walker, who quotes the passage.

† The cross is a Chinese letter, and was with them and the Egyptians, the symbol of perfection. The Ibis of the Egyptians was represented with human hands and feet, holding the staff of Isis in one hand, and a globe and cross in the other. It was common to many other

The great and important difference between the Irish Druids, and those of Britain and Gaul, is stated to have been that, while the latter were prohibited under pain of death, from reducing their mysteries to writing, the former were in the habit of doing so. The books which contained this sacred lore, as well as those which recorded the genealogies of distinguished families—the annals of the several kingdoms, and the praises of heroes, were kept with the most religious care, and had increased to such a number, that according to most of the early biographers of St. Patrick, he was enabled to consign at one literary *auto da fe*, 200 hundred of them to the flames. His efforts in this respect do not appear to have been singular; the enthusiasm of the new converts—the zeal of his successors in the ministry, ably assisted by that entomological vandal, the moth, not having left us the slightest vestige of these primitive volumes.*

nations—to the Lacedemonians, the Indians, and the Mexicans; among the last mentioned people there were many of them discovered by the Spaniards. In the island of Cozumal, near Yucatan, there were several; and in Yucatan itself, there was a stone cross, and there an Indian, considered a prophet among his countrymen, had declared, that a nation bearing that as a symbol, should arrive from a distant country. More extraordinary still, was a temple dedicated to the Holy Cross, by the Toltec nation, in the city of Cholula.—Beauford's *Druidism Revived*.—*Life in Mexico*, by Madame Calderon, p. 288.

* It is said, however, that Dudley Forbes had some of

The material on which the Pagan Irish are stated to have written, would, of itself, account for the total disappearance of their books. Parchment being only introduced about the time of St. Patrick, and paper not invented till the 11th century, they were compelled to use for the purposes of writing, tables or plates of the birch or beech tree, made even by the plane, and inscribed by an iron pen or style. These tables were called *Taibhle Filea*, or Poets' tables.*

the primitive birch tables on which the Ogham was written, in the year 1683.—Higgins's Celtic Druids, p. 21.

* The method of writing on wooden tables is undoubtedly very ancient. It was practised by the Egyptians, and Phenecians, and we are assured by Plutarch, that the laws which Solon gave to the Athenians, in the course of the 46th Olympiad, were engraven on tables of wood. Even the present Brahmins of India continue to write their prayers, and several other subjects relative to their religion, on thin plates of wood: and, the greater part of the aboriginal inhabitants of North America, to this day, draw their plans and hieroglyphical writings on the bark of birch trees. The form of the Scythic wooden books, was that of a square prism, about a foot in length, having the characters engraven on the four sides, but those of the ancient Greeks, Phenecians and Irish were thin oblong pieces, on which the characters were engraven from the left to the right, and from the right to the left alternately. This method of writing was called by the Greeks *boustrephedon*, or the ploughed ridges, as it resembled the course of the furrows of the plough. The Irish called it *cionn fa eite*, or the head of the ridge; or, *cor fa chasm*—the reaper's path.—Beauford's Druidism Revived, p. 205.

According to the Mahommedans, the Koran was copied from the preserved table fast by the throne of

The material on which their writing was inscribed being thus briefly alluded to, we now come to the more important subject of the letters themselves. This question is attended with the greatest difficulty—scarcely two of our antiquaries agreeing on the subject. Of what kind were the ancient alphabetical characters of the Irish language cannot now be ascertained, as the letters used in all Irish manuscripts at present in existence are, like the old Saxon letters, but corruptions of the Roman characters introduced with the Latin language by St. Patrick, and ever afterwards used by the Irish writers, to the exclusion of all others. This easy abandonment of their old letters by the Irish people, and their ready adoption of new ones, was accompanied by what appears to be a singular inconsistency. They still retained such a veneration for their ancient letters, as never to admit any of the Roman characters, the sound of which was not expressed by some letter in their primitive alphabet, even when they wrote Latin words. Although the original Irish letters are not now in existence, there is the strongest probability that they were the same as

God, on which table, says Southey, all the divine things, past, present, and to come, are recorded. The size of the table may be estimated by that of the pen wherewith these things were written over it. The great pen was one of the first created things—it is in length 500 years' journey, and in breadth 80.—*The Doctor*, vol. 3, p. 25.

the Phenecian, their number corresponding exactly with the original Cadmeian letters, which were no more than 16.*

Along with these letters, which were used for the profane purposes of general history, and for the common transactions of life, it has been insisted on by many writers that the Hibernian Druids, like the Egyptian priests, had a secret cipher, known by the name of *Ogham*, (which word, according to Sir William Jones, in the Shanscreeet means mysterious,) in which were inscribed such writings as treated of their religion, philosophy, and laws.

That there are many inscriptions in this character of great antiquity still existing in caves and on monumental stones throughout Ireland, and in places which are known to have been used as Pagan cemeteries, is beyond doubt; but any correct notion of their exact date is still denied us. Our most recent and candid authority, Mr. Petrie, comes to the conclusion that the fact of the druidical origin of the *Ogham* character remains to be proved.†

Among the most accurate writers on the subject, it is generally agreed that there were three

* "That they (the Irish) had letters antiently," says Spenser, "is nothing doubtful; for the Saxons of England are said to have their letters and learning, and learned men, from the Irish."—*State of Ireland*—1584.

† "Essay on the Round Towers," p. 48.

kinds of *ogham*s—two of which are confessedly modern, and something similar to the secret mode of writing used by Julius and Augustus Cæsar, and common to the Greeks and Romans. The third was the *Ogham croabh*, or the virgular *ogham*, which is thus described by Mr. Astle, in his “Origin of Writing,” p. 179: “It was composed of certain lines, or marks, which derive their power from their situation or position, as they stand in relation to some principal line, over or under which they are placed, or through which they are drawn. The principal line is horizontal, and serves for a rule or guide, whose upper part is called the left, and the under side the right, above, under, and through which the characters or marks are drawn, which stand in the place of vowels, consonants, diphthongs, and triphthongs.”

This central stem was originally perpendicular, which accounts for the strokes on the different sides being called right and left—the most ancient *ogham* being read after the oriental manner.* In this position the stem, with its characters, resembled a tree, and this species of *ogham* was called *feadh*, or trees. The person who is believed to have introduced this *ogham* was the primitive Hercules, who, according to the ancient Spanish as well as Irish traditions,

* Vall. Coll. 4, 76.

was a navigator and a philosopher. As such he was known to the ancient Irish, under the appellation of *Oghma*, and is mentioned by Lucian, under the name of Ogmius.* The *ogham*, it is also said, served for musical notes, in which case the *aicme* A, was only used, this *aicme*, or division, containing the five vowels only, as I. II. III. IIII. IIIII. for a. o. u. e. i.

Walker, however, in his "History of the Irish Bards," says there was no *notation* among the ancient Irish until after the 11th century, but in lieu of it they had a system of poetical accents. This difference of opinion among the most zealous writers shews what difficulties surround this subject, which, however, is most important to the proper understanding of the ancient history of this country, and which it should be the business of our professed antiquaries to clear up.

* The following is Lucian's description of Hercules, as given in Toland's "Hist. of the Druids." Lucian relates, that in Gaul he saw Hercules represented as a little old man, whom, in the language of the country, they call Ogmius, drawing after him an infinite multitude of persons, who seemed most willing to follow, though dragged by extremely fine and almost imperceptible chains, which were fastened at the end to their ears, and held at the other, not in either of Hercules' hands, which were both otherwise employed, but tied to the tip of his tongue, in which there was a hole on purpose, where all those chains entered. Lucian, wondering at this manner of portraying Hercules, was informed by a learned Druid who stood by, that Hercules did not in Gaul, as in Greece, betoken *strength of body*, but *force of eloquence*.

We have stated that the primitive religion of the Celtic Druids was remarkably simple and pure. From a variety of causes—amongst which, that tenacity of old ideas and dread of innovation, which are remarkable features in the Celtic character, may be considered the principal,—this simplicity was preserved for a long period, but by slow degrees became corrupted, first from the patriarchal adoration of one great spirit to which we have alluded, to the worship of the sun, that most universally diffused, and perhaps most excusable of all forms of erroneous worship,* down to the absurdities and sanguinary sacrifices of their later superstitions. The Druidical religion, says Michelet, had, if not instituted at least adopted and maintained, the practice of human

* The worship of Belus or the Sun, as the parent of nature was known to almost every pagan people—a religion which took its rise in Chaldea, was carried into Egypt, and from thence to Greece and spread itself also to the most distant parts of the world, and infected not only the eastern and western Scythians and Tartars, but the Mexicans too, for the Spaniards found it there.—Vall. Coll. 2, 67.

It also extended to Peru. An ancient tradition reports that while the Peruvians were struggling with the hardships of their barbarous state, there appeared on the banks of the Lake Titicaca, a man and woman of majestic form and clothed in decent garments, who declared themselves to be children of the Sun, sent by their beneficent father to instruct and reclaim them.—Rees' Cyclopaedia.

It was also worshipped by the Iroquois Indians of North America under the name of Grounhia, the Master of the Heavens.—Vall. Coll. 4, 395.

sacrifices; the priests stabbed the victim below the diaphragm, and drew their prognostics from the attitude in which he fell, from the convulsions of his limbs, and the colour and abundance of his blood. The worship of the moon, was naturally associated with that of the sun, and it was in her festivals that those golden ornaments of a crescent shape, which are occasionally found throughout the country were worn.*

Among the doctrines of oriental origin introduced by the Irish Druids at an early period, the most remarkable was that of the transmigration of the soul. With an amusing passage on this subject, taken from the *Liber Lecanus*, we shall conclude our sketch of the religious opinions of our pagan ancestors. In this book it is recorded that no doubt can be raised concerning the post-diluvian invasion of Ireland, since Tuan son of Cairil, who was born of the wife of Murdoch Muiding asserted it. For he lived in Kesair's time in the form of a man, then for 300 years in the form of a deer, after for 200 years in the shape of a wild boar, then for 300 years in the shape of a bird, and lastly 100 years in the shape of a salmon, which being caught by a fisherman, was made a present of to the queen of Ireland, on account of its rare beauty, and she upon eating it immediately conceived, and brought forth the

* Moore.

famous Tuan Mac Cairil, who related the truth of Kesair's expedition into Ireland, and also informed them of the invasion of the Firbolgs and Danians.

In the preceding remarks we have alluded to the great question, as to whether a knowledge of letters had been communicated to the inhabitants of this country, at any period much earlier than the fourth century of the Christian era. As far as the literary merits of the fragments are concerned, which have come down to us from the earliest period of our history, and which are attributed to pagan authors, we are not in a condition to speak. The question in itself is perhaps not very important, as the chief interest of the subject arises not so much from the intrinsic merits of the matter in dispute, as from its bearing on the still greater question of the social civilization of the people during the same period.

The list of Irish writers commences with Amergin the brother of Heber, Heremon and Ir, so early as the year of the world, 2935, a thousand years before the birth of Christ, and nearly 2000 years before the earliest Irish manuscript extant was in existence. From the year of the world 2935, to the year of our Lord 250, when Cormac was monarch of Ireland, there is a succession of Irish poets and legislators mentioned in the annals, and many of their compositions

still preserved, which are patiently waiting the "Open Sesame," of the translator.

The year of the world 3236, is generally assigned as the commencement of the reign of our celebrated legislator *Ollamh Fodhlah*, although many writers place it at a much later period. His reign is rendered remarkable by the establishment of the great Fes or triennial convention of Tarah, and for the wise laws promulgated by him, which are quoted in Cormac's glossary, written in the ninth century. He is stated by Ware to have received the name of Ollamh Fodhlah, for the excellent learning and abilities of which he was master, Ollamh signifying a Doctor, and Fodhlah Ireland, *i. e.* the Doctor of Ireland, or else from Ollamhain, an historian or bard. In addition to his laws, he is said to have transmitted to posterity a correct history of the several travels, voyages, adventures, wars and other memorable transactions of all his royal ancestors, from Feniusa Farsaidh, king of Cythia, down to his own times.

Other legislators and poets are mentioned, the principal of whom are Cimbooth, monarch of Ireland, A. M. 3596; Eochaid, king of Munster, A. M. 3900; Sean, son of Aghaid, A. M. 3902; Congal, A. M. 3940; Athairne of Binn Edair (Howth) A. M. 3950; Forchern, and many others.

A. D. 250. Bidding a not unwilling farewell

to those shadowy personages, who have so cheaply purchased an immortality of 3000 years, we gladly approach a brighter region. The first writer who presents himself to us, both in point of time and of rank is Cormac Ulfadha, the most accomplished of all the Milesian princes, says Mr. Moore, whether as a legislator, soldier or scholar. In the traditionary accounts which have come down to us concerning the events of this monarch's life ; there is a great deal of romantic interest. His marriage with the beautiful Eithna, foster child of the hospitable Brughach, would form a pleasing episode in an historical romance of that period ; while, perhaps, a deeper interest would be awakened by the picture of this monarch, spending the last years of his life in learned retirement at his rustic abode near Kells after having abdicated the throne, in consequence of the loss of one of his eyes, the laws of the country, at that time, prohibiting any one who had received a personal blemish, from exercising the functions of royalty. The principal pacific act of his reign was the establishment of three academies at Tara, the first for imparting instruction in military science, the second for the cultivation of historical learning, and the third for the study of jurisprudence.

His attempts at reforming the Bardic and Druidic orders, occasioned him considerable embarrassment, from the hostility which his enlight-

ened policy awakened in those powerful classes. Between these schemes of state reform, in elaborately revising the annals of the kingdom, which, from the time of Ollamh Fodhlah, had been preserved in the psalter of Tara, and in erecting the works at that palace, the remains of which, according to Mr. Petrie, are to be seen to this day, the active portions of his life seem to have been busily and usefully employed. His religious opinions were so philosophical in their nature, and so purified by the spirit of simple theism, as to give some colour to the opinion, that he was among the first of the few inhabitants of this island who embraced the Christian religion before the arrival of St. Patrick. In his humble abode, a thatched cabin near Kells, he composed those works which entitle his name, says Mr. Moore, to a place in the list of Royal Authors.

His "Advice to a King," written for the instruction of his son Cairbre, has been preserved. It has been translated by Mr. O'Donovan,* and is a very interesting document, intrinsically, as well as being one of the most ancient specimens of our literature in existence.

If the benevolent and noble sentiments of King Cormac, as expressed in this composition, were shared by his subjects, and transmitted to their children, there never was a people so prepared

* Dublin Penny Journal.

and fitted by providence for the reception of his gospel as the Irish, which perhaps may account for the wonderful success that attended the preaching of St. Patrick; the facility with which the bulk of the people abandoned the errors that Paganism must have blended with those virtues, and the speedy renown of the island as the focus of Christian piety and learning in the west.*

The only name of this remote period upon which we need linger for a moment, before approaching the important and interesting subject of St. Patrick, is that of *Oisín* the Bard, son of Fin Mac Cumhal, and grandson of Cormac. The name and exploits of Fin as general of the *Fianna Eirinn* or militia of Erin, are familiar to the people of this country, and are not only stamped upon their memory, but impressed upon the very mountains, and inseparably connected with some of the most remarkable and romantic scenery of the island itself. Few, if any of my readers require to be informed of the literary imposture attempted to be palmed upon the world during the last century by Macpherson, under the title of "the Poems of Ossian." His countryman Dempster had already acquired the un-

* As if to reward the virtues of King Cormac in his posterity, it is recorded that the first person converted and baptized by St. Patrick, was *Sinell*, who was the eighth in lineal descent from that good monarch.—*Lynch's Life of St. Patrick*, p. 125.

enviable notoriety and soubriquet of the "Saint-Stealer," from appropriating our most eminent saints to Scotland, which it would appear Macpherson was ambitious of outdoing by the plunder of our most famous Bard, and most illustrious hero. It must be confessed that he did his work ably and almost successfully; the greatest intellects of Europe from Alfieri to Napoleon being deceived into a hearty enthusiasm for the supposed Celtic poet. The poems attributed to the real Oisín (who was undoubtedly an Irishman), on which Macpherson's epic of Fingall was founded, have been so interpolated by later hands, as scarcely to belong to any one age in particular, but certainly more to the ninth century than to the third.

These poems have been translated by Miss Brooke, the daughter of the celebrated Henry Brooke. Her version, however, is written more in accordance with the cold even mediocrity that characterised the poetry of her own time, than with the spirit of the original. In the "Transactions of the Irish Academy"* there is a paper by Dr. Drummond on the Ossianic poems, the occasional translations introduced into which please us much better; from which we take the following passages.

Oisín's description of the fair enchantress, in the poem of the Chase, is more florid, and is cer-

* Vol. 1, sec. 2, p. 121.

tainly not equalled by anything in Macpherson's poems.

By a lake of crystal sheen
Spies a nymph of loveliest form and mien.
Her cheeks, as the rose, were crimson bright;
Her lips, the red berries glow;
Her breast, as the blossoms downy white:
Her brow, as the virgin snow;
Her locks were like the molten gold;
Her eyes, as a freezing star.
Shouldst thou, O sage, such nymph behold,
Her beauty thy peace might mar.

The following passage is beautifully descriptive of rural scenery. It is taken from the commencement of the poem entitled *Bhin Bolbin*.—
Oisin speaks—

Bhin Bolbin, thou art sad to-day!
Thou that wast erst of aspect gay,
And lovely to be seen.
O, son of Calfruin! then 'twas sweet
To find a soft and mossy seat
On its lofty summit green.
Thou hill of battles, stained with gore,
How oft thy fortress, strong around,
Where dwelt a hero bold of yore,
Rose music sweet of horn and hound;
The bittern round thee boomed at night—
The grouse, loud whirring in his flight,
Peopled thy heath, and every tree
Rang with the small bird's melody.

Yes, 'twas delight to hear the cry
Of hounds along thy valleys sweep;
To hear the rock's wild son reply
From every cliff and steep.

To see the chiefs of the Fenian band,
To slip the greyhounds, ready stand;
And groups of maidens, young and fair,
That plucked, as they went, the flow'rets rare,
With berries of every form and hue,
Of crimson blush, or of glossy blue,
From bramble and bush—or cresses young,
That by the crystal streamlet sprung;—
And passing sweet was the voice of their song
As the fair-haired damsels roved along.

Sweet, too, by the source of the lonely stream
To see aloof the eagle sail,
To hear her solitary scream
Burst stealing on the vale
To hear the otter's whining note;
Or, mid the hollow mountain rocks,
The barking of the wary fox;
Or mellow song of blackbird float
From bower and grove, o'er wood and lawn,
To evening hour from early dawn.

As he recollects the past, and contrasts it with
his present forlorn situation, he falls into a strain
of touching pathos:

With joy it thrilled my heart, I vow,
To sit upon the mountain's brow,
And all the glorious landscape view—
The seven brave Fenian bands around,
In war and peace still faithful found—
But now my friends are few!
Then merry and gay, in the summer's ray,
They frolicked and they shone;
With autumn's blast away they past,
And I am left alone.
My fate with tears may dim your eye,
And wake your tender sympathy.

The universal diffusion of the Christian religion throughout this country by means of the preaching and labours of St. Patrick, is in every point of view the most important event in our history. However illustrious Ireland may have been in that remote antiquity to which we have referred above, and how great soever had been the interest which she excited among the nations that were at the head of the then civilization of the world,—it is certain that for some centuries preceding the mission of our great apostle, she had been silently withdrawn from the thoughts and almost the memory of men; a combination of circumstances enabling her by the practice of many peaceful virtues to prepare for the great gift about to be conferred upon her.* The misfortunes that were gathering, “like cloud on cloud,” round the summits of the seven-hilled city, occupied the attention of her children, to the exclusion of all other topics; while the dreams of ambition, the excitement and casualties of war, and the beauty of their new possessions, gave sufficient occupation to the thoughts of her barbarian conquerors. During this period of disorder and revolution, Ireland, separated from

* “For six centuries antecedently to the introduction of Christianity, history records no more than six or seven provincial insurrections, with scarcely as many general engagements, without any attack or invasion from abroad.”—*Lynch's Life of St. Patrick*, p. 4.

the noisy scene by her girdling waters, in her sacred groves and quiet valleys spent a long and tranquil novitiate, until receiving the great vows of Christian faith and duty from the lips of St. Patrick, she once again entered the sisterhood of nations—the fairest and the holiest of them all! The doubts that were for a moment excited by unfriendly and intemperate criticism upon the subject of St. Patrick, have been long since set at rest, every recent writer of eminence agreeing that, notwithstanding some difficulties which undoubtedly attend the subject, the existence of St. Patrick, and the chief events of his life, are facts as well authenticated as any circumstance of a similar nature could possibly be.* Of the various writings attributed to St. Patrick, these are two

* In the life of St. Patrick already quoted, the foreign and native writers who have mentioned the apostle of Ireland, from the sixth to the fifteenth century, are summed up. The following are some of the names:—Probus, who, according to Bollandus, lived in the sixth century; Nennius the British Historian, who, according to his last editor, Mr. Gale, lived in 620; Bede, who died in 735, in his martyrology; Eric of Auxerre, who wrote in 850; by Sigibert, the monk of Gemblours, in Flanders, who died in 1112; by William of Malmesbury, who died in 1140; by St. Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, in Burgundy, who died in 1156; by Joceline, who wrote a life of St. Patrick, in 1185; by Vincentius, bishop of Beauvais, in his Historical Mirror, written in 1244; by James de Vooraigne, bishop of Genoa, in 1350; by St. Antonini, archbishop of Florence, in his Chronicle, written in 1459; and by Petrus de Natalibus, about the year 1470.

that are generally admitted to be genuine, *viz.* his *Epistle to Coroticus*, which is extant in manuscript in the library of the cathedral church of Salisbury, in England, and his “Confession,” or letter to the Irish people, which is preserved in manuscript in the same place. To these Mr. Petrie, in his valuable essay upon Tara, has added a third—namely, a hymn, said to have been composed by the saint on his way to that famous locality. The fact of his having composed some hymn, under the circumstances alluded to, is mentioned by most of the early biographers, and particularly in that life of St. Patrick known as the Tripartite Life, which, in its present shape, appears to have been compiled in the ninth or tenth century; but which Colgan supposes to have been first written by St. Evin, in the sixth. After mentioning the dangers that beset St. Patrick, his seven companions, and his youthful disciple, St. Benignus, on this journey, from which they escaped by appearing to those who lay in wait for them as eight stags and one hind, the history thus proceeds: “Then it was that the holy man composed that hymn in the vernacular tongue, which is commonly called *Feth Fiadha*, or by others, St. Patrick’s breastplate; and it is ever since held in the greatest respect by the Irish, because it is believed and proved by abundant experience that it preserves those who de-

voutly utter it, from dangers threatening soul and body.”*

Mr. Petrie, after stating that it might be difficult to prove satisfactorily that this hymn is the real composition of St. Patrick, though believed to be so in the seventh century, alludes to the internal evidence of its antiquity, which he considers to be of the strongest nature. The entire hymn being so tinged with pagan allusions, as to indicate a period for its composition antecedent to the full development of the Christian doctrine in this country. This argument, while it establishes the extreme antiquity of the hymn, almost entirely dispels the idea of St. Patrick having been the author. The probable truth may be, that the copy from which that in the *Liber Hymnorum* was taken, may have been written by an early convert, who carried some of the prejudices and superstition of his pagan belief into his newer and purer creed, interpolating and adding a little to the original work of the saint. Another proof, not, we believe, hitherto noticed, of the remote period in which this hymn was in existence, may, perhaps, be drawn from the allusion to it in the twenty-sixth stanza of the celebrated hymn of St. Fiech, generally supposed to have been written a few years after the death of St. Patrick.

* “Trias Thaumatarges,” p. 126.

A hymn sung by thee, while living,
Will be a protecting coat of mail to all.

Before alluding to this latter hymn, we shall retrace our steps a little, and mention a few persons, who, even thus early, both at home and abroad contributed to the glory of Ireland by the splendours of their talents and their virtues. The first of these, in point of time, was St. Mausuetus, who, according to Calmet and Dr. Lanigan, was sent from Rome to Toul, in Lorraine, about the middle of the fourth century. The next was Dubhtach, bard and druid of Laogaire, monarch of Ireland at the commencement of St. Patrick's mission. But the illustrious names of this period were Pelagius, Celestius, and Sedulius; the two latter, undoubtedly, Irishmen; and the former, though not so certainly, yet most probably an Irishman also.

The heresy originated by Pelagius, and mainly propagated through the east and west by the labours of his favourite disciple and countryman, Celestius, was one of the most dangerous that the church had to contend with in its early career. The doctrines taught being so captivating to minds imbued with a certain spirit of philosophical philanthropy, and so flattering to the pride of man, by proclaiming the perfectability of human nature. This insidious error, which required even the intellect and zeal of St. Augustine to eradicate from the church, and which

from that period has not formed a portion of the belief of any professedly Christian congregation, has latterly taken fresh root among the avowed sceptics, several of the more amiable of that class having proclaimed their adhesion to this fascinating doctrine.

The third name, that of Sedulius, is one, however, that the most pious and orthodox Irishman may pride in as a countryman. His prose works ranking him as one of the earliest and wisest of the Christian fathers, while his poetical writings secured him a place in the illustrious band of Roman classics, and shed new lustre on the expiring glories of Italian song.* Sedulius is but the Latinized form of the Irish name Siedhuil, which is stated by Lanigan to be the same as Sheil—a name of which, under any of its forms, Ireland may well be proud.† Colgan enumerates eight eminent Irishmen, who bore the name of Sedulius, the first of whom, he says, was the

* Warton says:—"Amid the impediments, however, and the necessary degeneration of taste and style, a few poets supported the dignity of the Roman muse with tolerable dignity during the decline of the Roman empire. These were Ausonius, Paulinus, Sidonius, *Sedulius*, Arator, Juvencus, Prosper, and Fortunatus. With the last, who flourished at the beginning of the sixth century, and was bishop of Poitiers, the Roman poetry is supposed to have expired."—*Second Dissertation*, p. 14.

† England, too, can boast a poet of this name. The celebrated ballad of "Chevey Chase" being written by *Rychard Sheale*.

great poet, who is most deservedly ranked among the Latin fathers, and who flourished about the year 430, in the reign of Theodosius the Younger. Trithemius describes him as a man well versed in the knowledge of the scriptures, of great accomplishments in human learning, and of an excellent taste both for prose and verse. For the love of learning he left Scotia (Ireland), travelled into France, and from thence into Italy and Asia; and, at length departing from the borders of Achaia, he came to be in high esteem in the city of Rome, on account of his wonderful learning.

His chief poetical work, called *Carmen Paschale*, is written in heroic metre,* and is chiefly descriptive of the miracles of the Old and New Testament. In addition to this, he composed several beautiful hymns in Iambic verse; some of which are read in the offices of the Catholic

* An amusing circumstance is mentioned by Bayle, (art. Sedulius,) which, perhaps, may induce some of our readers to pay more attention to their writing, and may even work a miracle upon printers themselves. A slight clerical mistake of a few letters having nearly consigned the name of the pious and orthodox Sedulius to the condemned regiments of heresy for ever. Pope Gelasius had described the *Paschate opus* as written *heroicis versibus*; but by an unlucky clerical error the word *hereticis* was, in the course of time, substituted for *heroicis*, which, says Moore, brought our Irish poet into much disgrace at Rome, and led some canonists to the wise decision "*omnia poemata esse heretica.*"—*Vide Bayle and Moore*, l. 228.

Church to this day. Of these hymns, the most celebrated are the two commencing with the following lines: "A solis ortus cardine," and "Hostis Herodes impie," since changed into *Crudelis Herodes Deum*. Hanmer adds three others, about two of which he is certainly mistaken, as the lines he gives as the beginning of distinct hymns, are but the second and third lines of the first one we have mentioned. Of this poem, which is read in the Office for the festival of the nativity of our Lord, we shall present an humble translation, as well as the original, which has the additional interest of being, perhaps, one of the earliest poems in which tolerably correct rhyme is employed all through the poem.

HYMNUS.

I.

A solis ortus cardine
Ad usque terræ limitem,
Christum canamus principem,
Natum Maria virgine.

II.

Beatus Auctor sæculi,
Servile corpus induit:
Ut carne carnem liberans,
Ne perderet quos condidit.

III.

Castæ parentis viscera,
Cœlestis intrat gratia:

Venter puellæ bajulat,
Secreta, quæ non noverat.

IV.

Domus pudici pectoris,
Templum repente sit Dei :
Intacta nesciens virum,
Concepit alvo Filium.

V.

Enititur puerpera,
Quem Gabriel prædixerat :
Quem ventre Matris gestiens,
Baptista clausum senserat.

VI.

Fœno jacere pertulit,
Præsepe non abhorruit :
Et lacte modico pastus est,
Per quem nec ales esurit.

VII.

Gaudet chorus cœlestium,
Et Angeli canunt Deo :
Palamque fit pastoribus,
Pastor Creator omnium.

VIII.

Jesu tibi sit gloria,
Qui natus es de virgine,
Cum Patro, et almo spiritu,
In sempiterna sæcula.

HYMN.

I.

From where the glorious sun doth spring,
To where he sinks—his bright work done—
Let all to Christ in praises sing,
The blessed Virgin's Son.

II.

Oh ! what a sweet and mystic plan,
Jehovah leaves his golden throne
As man to free his fellow man—
As God to save his own.

III.

How proud that humble maiden's doom,
In whom God's grace divinely glows—
Who bears a secret in her womb,
Of which she nothing knows.

IV.

The humble dwelling of her breast
Becomes God's temple, undefiled ;
And she, His purest, brightest, best,
Brings forth her wondrous child.

V.

She travails with that royal boy,
Of whom the angel Gabriel spoke—
For whom the Baptist leaped with joy,
Ere yet on earth he woke.

VI.

Within a wretched crib he lies—
A shivering, weak, unwelcome guest—
And milk alone *His* wants supplies
Who fills the young bird's nest.

VII.

But angels guard that humble throne,
And joyful hymn the Man-God's birth—
And first to shepherd men is shown
The Shepherd of the Earth!

VIII.

Let earth's weak race, and heaven's great host,
In fondest tones of rapture pray—
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—
For ever, and for aye!

Perhaps we cannot have a better opportunity than the present, of giving some idea of the structure of versification adopted not only by the Irish writers who made use of their vernacular language, but also by those who, like Sedulius, introduced into the Latin tongue, the peculiar cadence and harmony of their native dialect.—According to some writers, Irish poetry was as abundant in the variations of its lyric measures, as the Irish language itself was copious, flowing and harmonious, there being anciently, according to them, one hundred varieties of verse among the Hibernian bards. On the other side it has been

stated,* that in all the more ancient specimens which have reached our times, there is great simplicity and uniformity. The rythm consists in an equal distance of intervals, and similar terminations, each line being divisible into two, that it may be more easily accommodated to the voice and the music of the bards. It is not formed by the nice collocation of long and short syllables, but by a certain harmonic rythm adjusted to the voice of song by the position of words which touch the heart and assist the memory. In every ancient Irish verse, a pause in the very middle of it may be discovered, from which the succeeding clause of the same verse commences, and making harmony with the preceding, is completed in the same space of time, and with a similar termination. Hence, each verse consists of two lines, determinating with a like cantilena, and making two verses as to sound. Of this form of rhyme which appears to have been peculiar to Ireland, there are several examples in our ancient writers; the earliest instance of its introduction into Latin poetry being the hymn of Sedulius already given.

A solis ortus cardine, ad usque terræ limitem,
Christum canamus principem, natum Maria virgine.

This mode of versification was afterwards used by our great St. Columbkille, (to whose poems

* By Dr. Drummond.

we shall allude more particularly immediately,) by St. Columbanus and others, until, in the seventh century, it became naturalized among the Anglo Saxons. Adhelm (who was educated by our countryman Maidulph, and who was the earliest writer of that race who composed in the Latin language,) having introduced occasional rhymes into his prose treatise on Virginitv.

So far for description. The reader may, however, prefer to have an example of an English poem written according to the rules of Irish versification, and this we are enabled to offer.—In the Book of Invasions is a poem on the spoils and treasures brought into Ireland by the Tuatha de Danans. There is a literal translation of it in the folio edition of Keating's History. In the first volume (the only one published) of a new translation of that work by Mr. Halliday, in Dublin, in 1811, (which death prevented him from completing,) is the following metrical version :—

Thuha true their treasures bring,
And lyric lore and learning;
Spells and charms, and every art,
Hell's own arms, wicked witchcraft.

Jarvanel ag'd, prophet prime,
Son of Nevvy, deft, divine,
Th' hero doughty, dread in deeds,
Read in routing ne'er recedes.

Beonagh's sons, brave, firm their fame,
 Bold he led as both became,
 From yoke not sweet, taunt and teen,
 With fleet to lands of Lochlin.

Cities four of noted name,
 Long they ruled with sway supreme;
 Eager here they arts advance,
 Deadly darts to ignorance.

Gorias great, Falias free,
 Finias, Murias, main, mighty;
 Far and wide has flowed their fame,
 Noble pride these towns twice-twain.

Moris, Erus, famous, fair,
 Arias, Shemias, sage severe,
 Long to live in lasting verse,
 We give these masters matchless.

Moris taught in Falias fair,
 Erus in Gorias gleeful;
 Shemias taught in Murias moere,
 In Finias, Arias austere.

Four great treasures bright they bring
 From afar t' isle of Eirin;
 Brazen cauldron, stone and spear,
 Sword alone for death decreed.

The Lia Fál from Falias famed,
 Stone that Eirin's prince proclaimed,
 From Gorias came glittering glave,
 Of bickering Looee long nief.*

* Long handed.

From Finias o'er bounding sea,
 Came spear of Looee lordly ;
 From Muria's great gaudy prize,
 Daghdá's caldron, strange surprise.

King supreme of mortal men !
 Protect us prince of heaven !
 Thou who calmly suff'redst slight
 Alms and lustrous deeds delight.

Such, says Mr. Halliday, in English verse, is a specimen of Gaelic metre ; it will suffice here to say that the translation is extremely literal, a thing which will appear almost incredible when it is considered that the Irish themselves looked upon this composition as *the most difficult under the sun*. The following are the principal requisites in this kind of verse :—1. Seven syllables in every line. 2. Every stanza to make a perfect sense by itself, without any dependance on the following one. 3. The last word of every second and fourth lines to exceed that of the first and third by a syllable ; as in the first stanza, the first line ends with a word of one syllable, and the second with a word of two ; so also in the fourth stanza of this poem, the third line ends with a word of two syllables, and the fourth necessarily ends with a word of three. 4. In every line two *principal* words, either noun or verb must begin with a vowel, or with the same consonant, as *lore* and *learning*, in the first stanza both begin with l. 5. There must be some kind of rhyme or corres-

pondence at the end of each hemistich, as between *bring* and *learning*. 6. In the two last lines of every stanza, there must be a rhyme or jingling between all the principal words ; as in the first stanza, *Hell's own arms* in the fourth line agrees with *Spells and charms* in the third ; and in the second stanza, *read in routing* agrees with *dread and doughty*. 7. No word can occur twice in the same line, except it be in a different case, or have a different meaning, or except it be some word like *of, in, us, the, our, to, &c.* ; and these words can never form the correspondence mentioned above in article four.*

From what has been already stated, the reader will perceive the utter fallacy of the opinion that attributes the introduction of rhyme into Europe, to the Saracens in the ninth century, or that supposes it to have been a barbarism utterly unknown to the Greeks and Romans in the days of their greatest refinement. That it was known to the most civilized nations of Asia from time immemorable, is an undisputed fact, and adds another to the innumerable arguments in favour of our early connection with the East, which spring up around the feet of even the least curious searcher of our ancient history. We have described the peculiar species of rhyme used by our writers in the fifth century, and it is certainly an extraordi-

* Halliday's Keating, p. 203.

nary fact, that in the Carthaginian poetry in Plautus, five out of six lines rhyme in the middle after the Irish fashion.

Rhyme was not unknown to the Hebrews, *Martinaceus* having traced it in the song in Deuteronomy, and in the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Muratori quoted a couplet of Ennius from Cicero's Tusculan questions; and in the Hymns and Iliad of Homer, *Homoiteleuton*, or rhymed closes, are frequently to be met with. In book 5, Iliad, 150, there are seven lines having middle rhymes, and in the Hymn to Ceres there are fifty lines with middle rhymes, and seventy-eight which rhyme at the end.*

It is clear, then, that it was not from an ignorance of rhyme that the Greeks and Romans so sparingly introduced it into their poetry, but because the metres they preferred were more consonant to the genius of their respective languages. Even at the present day, the ancient classical metres have been revived with wonderful spirit and success among the descendants of those races from whom, according to Sir William Temple, this very term of rhyme had been derived,† several of the most beautiful

* Turner's Hist. of the Anglo Saxons, vol. 3; and Archæologia, vol. 14, p. 189.

† Sir William Temple, in his "Essay on Poetry," says that the word *rhymes* is derived from the Gothick word *Runes*, and not from the Greek *rythmus*, as vulgarly supposed. Runes was properly the name of the

poems of Sweden, Germany, and Denmark being written in unrhymed hexameters.*

The "Hymn of St. Fiech," already alluded to, is written in Irish, and contains, within the narrow limits of thirty-four stanzas, a description of the chief events of St. Patrick's life. There are considerable doubts, however, that this hymn, though exceedingly old, is the composition of St. Fiech, from the allusion in the very second line to the histories of St. Patrick then written

Natus est Patricius Nempturri,
Ut refertur in historiis—

according to Colgan's Latin version; or as Mr. Lynch, in his correct translation from the original, gives it:

Patrick was born at heavenly Tours,
As it is ascertained in stories.

ancient Gothic letters or characters, which were invented first, or introduced, by Odin, in the kingdom or colony of the Gotes, or Goths, which he planted in the north-west parts of Europe, and round the Baltic sea.—*Temple's Works*, 1, 242.

* Of these perhaps the most beautiful is Bishop Tegner's "Children of the Lord's Supper," so exquisitely translated from the Swedish by the American poet, Longfellow. Klopstock's works are mostly written in the classical metres. Southey and others have attempted to naturalise them in English literature, but without success, that language not being sufficiently rich in polysyllabic words to meet the necessities of those measures.

Some of the allusions in this ancient poem are exceedingly difficult, the translator, with some of the ablest Irish scholars whom he consulted, not being able to understand some of the passages. To the student of the Irish language the original is exceedingly valuable; but to the general reader the literal translation would appear but a dry recapitulation of names and events. If some of the stanzas were more intelligible we would attempt a metrical version; but as it is, we feel deterred by the difficulties we have described.

One of the most important and interesting names connected with our early literature is that of the great and good St. Columba, or as he is better known to his countrymen, St. Columbkille. While Ireland, justly regarding him as one of the greatest and holiest of her children, places him second only to Patrick in her affections, Scotland venerates him as her Apostle, and England feels towards him that respect and gratitude which his services in the cause of piety and knowledge so eminently deserve. "No man ever lived," says his most recent biographer, "to whom the highlands and isles of Scotland are more indebted than to St. Columba; and perhaps few lived to whom the British isles in general were under stronger obligations. It was Columba who kindled that torch which in the darkest ages shed its kindly rays far beyond the

limits of the highlands, and which contributed much to enlighten even the south of Britain; for, according to the testimony of the venerable Bede, "England was indebted for many of its most learned and pious divines, to the seminary of learning established by Columba in a remote and obscure corner of the highlands."*

How gladly would we dwell, if this were the proper place, upon the character and life of this illustrious man! How gladly would we follow him through all the events of his life from his birth in the hereditary home of his royal ancestors, to his grave in that "isle of his heart" which his piety and his labours have rendered "illustrious." At every period of his life do we find him beloved and venerated—the fervour of his piety, the gentleness of his character, the sweetness of his disposition, and the cheerfulness of his manner rendering him a favourite with every one who came within the sphere of their influence. Even in his childhood the distinguishing features of his character were so apparent as to make him pre-eminently remarkable at those schools where he had saints for his instructors and saints for his fellow-pupils; and even then to have earned that proudest title in which men embody their highest conceptions of goodness and of greatness—that of "Saint."

* Smith's "Life of Columba," Edinburgh, 1798.

There are, happily, few persons in this portion of the world at present, who are in a position thoroughly to appreciate, at the same time, the labours and the utility of the early Christian missionary. He was "not merely the preacher or the administrator of the sacraments, but the herald of literature, of science, and of human improvement in every shape."* Not only did all the Christian virtues accompany him, ennobling and elevating the affections, regulating the passions, and making the domestic hearth a sacred place, but all the blessings of knowledge and the comforts of civilization followed in his train. The increased productiveness of the land, occasioned by the more correct notions of agriculture which he diffused, kept pace with the awakened fertility of the human heart; and as the solid and substantial wonders of architecture grew gradually beneath his hand, the edifice of modern society and civilization arose! Of that band of benefactors and true conquerors no one deserves a higher place than the gentle "dove of the churches," St. Columbkille.

Of Columba's Latin poems there are several in existence. Colgan has published three. One of them was composed during a thunder storm at Durrough, another on the creation, fall of angels, and final judgment, and the third a hymn

* Literary Men of Great Britain and Ireland in Lardner's Cyc. 1, p. 2.

to the Redeemer. Smith, in his "Life of Columba," has translated the three. We select the second as a specimen :—

HYMN.

On the Creation, Fall of Angels, Final Judgment, &c.

The God omnipotent, who made the world,
Is subject to no change. He was, he is,
And he shall be. *Th' Eternal* is his name.
Equal in Godhead and eternal power
Is Christ the Son. So is the Holy Ghost.
These sacred glorious three are but the same;
In persons different, but one God and Lord.

This God created all the heav'nly hosts,
Archangels, angels, potentates, and powers,
That so the emanations of his love
Might flow to myriads, diffusing good.
But from this eminence of glory fell
The apostate Lucifer, elate with pride
Of his high station and his glorious form;
Fill'd with like pride, and envying God himself
His glory, other angels shared his fate,
While the remainder kept their happy state.

Thus fell a third of the bright heavenly stars,
Involv'd in the old serpent's guilt and fate,
And with him suffer in th' infernal gulf,
The loss of heav'n, in chains of darkness bound
God then to being call'd this lower world,
According to the plan formed in his mind.
He made the firmament, the earth, and sea,

The sun, the moon, and stars—a glorious host !
The earth he clad with herbs, for food, and trees,
And then to every living thing gave birth,
And last to man, whom he made lord of all.

When angels (the first morning stars) beheld
The wondrous fabric, with glad songs they hymned
The praise of the almighty architect,
For such displays of wisdom, power, and love.

But our first parents, from their happy state
Seduced by Satan, were with terror filled,
With dreadful nights appall'd, till God with grace
Consoled their hearts, and Satan's power restrained ;
His providential care he also show'd,
And bade the humid clouds distil their rains ;
And times and seasons in their order run ;
Rivers and seas (like giants bound in chains)
He forced to keep within the limits fixed,
And flow for ever for the use of man.

Lo ! earth's vast globe, suspended by his power,
On nothing hangs, as on a solid base ;
Hell, too, his word obeys ; where monsters dire,
And flames, and fire, and smoke, and gnawing worms,
Torment his foes, who gnash their teeth with pain ;
Though once they slighted, now they feel his power,
And must reluctantly his will obey.

O happy they who love his holy law,
And in the blessings of the saints partake !
Who in the paradise of God above
Drink of the living stream, and eat the fruit
Of that life-giving tree, ordained by God
To heal the nations, and to feed the soul.

Thrice happy is the soul that shall ascend
To this abode of God, when the last trump
Shall sound, and shake the earth more than of old,
When Sinai shook, and Moses was afraid.

This awful day of God the Lord draws nigh,
When earthly objects shall have lost their charms,
And joy or terror fill each human soul ;
Then shall we stand before the judgment-seat,
To render an account of all our deeds—
Then shall our sins before our face be set,
The books be opened, and the conscience heard ;
None shall be missing ; for the dead shall hear
The voice of God, and from their graves come forth
To join their souls, and stand before the bar.

Time runs his course no more, the wand'ring orbs
Through heaven lose their course, the sun grows dark,
Eclipsed by the glory of the Judge ;
The stars drop down, as in a tempest fruit
Is shaken from the tree ; and all the earth,
Like one vast furnace, is involved in flames.
See ! the angelic hosts attend the Judge,
And on ten thousand harps his praises hymn ;
Their crowns they cast before his feet, and sing
“ Worthy the Lamb that died to be the Judge !
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be praise.”

The sentence past, consuming fire shall seize
The unbelieving, disobedient crowd ;
But we who have believed, and kept his word,
Shall enter into glory with the Lord :
And then in different ranks we shall receive,
Through grace, rewards proportioned to our deeds,
And dwell in endless glory with our Lord.

Almighty Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Thou *one* Eternal, ever blessed God,
To me the least of saints vouchsafe thy grace.
O may I join the thousands round thy throne!

Our limits warn us to bring this Introduction to a close, otherwise we would gladly follow St. Brendan of Clonfert in his wonderful voyage of seven years into the Atlantic, probably anticipating Madoc in his discovery of America; or Fridoline, the traveller, in his wanderings over Europe; or St. Bridget to the sacred oak of Kildare; or St. Columbanus to his grave near the sunny waters of Naples. We must leave to others to do justice to the Latinity of Adamnanus, the science of Virgilius, the learning of Flaccus Albinus (Alcuin), the historic eminence of Tigernach and of Marianus, and the scholastic philosophy of the "Subtle Doctor," Duns Scotus—that prodigy of learning and literary industry, who, dying at thirty-four years of age, has left such a number of folios behind him, as appal the most indefatigable student of these degenerate days. We must be silent on these and many others—our business at present lies with the English-writing poets of this country, and we therefore bid adieu to those sacred and venerable names, whose fame is the only inheritance of which we have not been deprived.

Such as we have endeavoured to describe it

was the ancient condition of this country—a country so venerable for its antiquity—so interesting for its traditions—so elevated in its aspirations. At no period to which the eye of history can reach—at no period, however remote, of which tradition has preserved the slightest memorial, was she destitute of those claims upon our veneration, our pity, and our love. When we find a people through a long succession of ages—even at periods when desolation had more darkly settled down upon the land—seeking knowledge before all things, honouring its professors, forwarding its seekers, rewarding its defenders, we cannot deny that people unbounded praise for their intelligence, and perseverance, and unbounded regret for the untoward calamities that have prevented them from taking a high place among the nations of the earth.

It is not to be wondered at, that Irishmen are fond of recalling the ancient glories of their country, and that they live more in the past than in the present; for the past, such as it was in fact, and such as it is presented to us in the traditions of the people and the songs of the bards, is indeed a pleasing picture to behold. We see a compact and spacious island, fertile in its soil, favoured in its position, friendly in its climate, sufficiently near the Continent to receive from it all the necessaries and luxuries that

its own bosom could not produce, and sufficiently remote as to hear the mighty heavings of Europe—the gathering hum of the barbarian crusaders in the German forests—and the fall of Rome itself, as a subdued and far-off echo. We see it availing itself of that position, guarded by stupendous cliffs, and secure within a magic circle of waters through which for ages barbarism or foreign aggression could not pierce; and cultivating sciences, the slightest taste for which alone would indicate a previously existing condition of peace, security, and civilization. We see the entire land, as it were, consecrated to knowledge and religion; the hills stupendous temples to the deity; the rude rocks—man's primeval altars—dedicated to his honour and inscribed with his name, and the beautiful and majestic oak, girdling the sacred places, and bearing in its arms that mysterious present of the gods, medicinal for man's infirmities, and a type of his immortality!

A moment's reflection on these things will convince the most sceptical that our story is not that painful chronicle of calamity which is generally supposed. On the surface, indeed, it is cold, gloomy, and repulsive, like the clay that covers a mine; but underneath is many a vein of purest ore, of courage and virtue, of fidelity and perseverance.

Our history may be compared to those mystical pictures in the book of St. Bridget, "whose colours and workmanship at the first blush were dark and unpleasant, but in the view wonderful, lively, and artificial."*

* Campion, p. 44.

POETS AND DRAMATISTS OF IRELAND.

RICHARD STANYHURST.

BORN 1547—DIED 1618.

CONSIDERING what has been the fate of Ireland, and the almost incurable evils under which she has suffered, and is still suffering, from the narrow and miserable policy that springs out of religious bigotry, there is, perhaps, a singular propriety in commencing our list of Anglo-Irish Poets with the name of Richard Stanyhurst. He was a man eminently favored, both by nature and by fortune, being gifted by the former with talents, which even his unwise sincerity upon religious matters failed to conceal ; and being placed by the latter in that social position which, even in the absence of great talents, would have raised him to the highest worldly distinction. His preference of an unfashionable and denounced creed, however, destroyed all those advantages, and compelled him, in the words of a recent writer, “to eke out a subsistence for his latter days as a chaplain in Austria, instead of being, as he might have been, Lord Chancellor of Ireland.”*

* Bell's English Poets, vol. 2, p. 104.—Lardner's Cyclopædia.

Richard Stanyhurst was the second son of James Stanyhurst, and was born in the city of Dublin, about the year 1547. His father filled the office of recorder, as well as speaker to the Irish House of Commons during several parliaments. Richard was placed at an early age at the celebrated school of Peter Whyte, himself a man of great piety, ability, and learning, and who, like his pupil, was a victim to the intolerant spirit of the age.* He became a commoner of University College, Oxford, in 1563, where, improving those rare natural parts that he was endowed with, he wrote commentaries on *Porphyry*, (a system of logic), at two year's standing, being then 18 years of age, to the great admiration of learned men and others.† After taking one degree, that of A.B., at Oxford, he left the college, and retired to London, where he became a student, first at Furnival's and then at Lincoln's Inn. After applying himself for some time to the study of the law, he returned to Ireland, and embraced the Catholic religion. This step was tantamount

* Peter Whyte, noted for his excellency in human learning while he continued in the University, (Oxford,) was born in the diocess of Waterford, in Ireland; elected fellow of Oriel College, an. 1551, and in the year 1555 was admitted master of arts. About the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign he returned to his native country, and became the happy schoolmaster of Munster, and Dean of Waterford for a time. From which place being ejected for his religion about 1565, he continued, notwithstanding, in his beloved faculty of pedagogy, &c., and died about the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. *Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses*, 1, 515.

† Wood, 2, 252.

to a voluntary surrender of all those expectations which his talents and position would have entitled him to entertain. From that period he became a wanderer on the earth, his wife, Genet, daughter of Sir Christopher Barnewell, as if to complete his misfortunes, having died in 1579, in her 19th year. She was buried at Chelsea. He visited several countries, and led a life of great vicissitude, and occasional privation. Necessity compelled him to undertake several characters: now as an alchemist, and discoverer of the philosopher's stone, as at Antwerp; now that of a physician, as in Spain; until at length, taking holy orders, he was appointed chaplain to the Archduke of Austria, by whose friendship and liberality he was enabled to spend the remainder of his life in tranquillity and happiness.

The high position in his age to which Stanyhurst is entitled as an historian, a theologian, and a man of letters is undisputed; but unfortunately there was and is the same perfect unanimity upon his very slender claims to that character which alone entitles him to a place in this volume—that of poet.

As a writer of Latin verses, he is said to have been more successful. He and Gabriel Harvey (the friend of Spenser) being considered “the best for iambics of their age.”* The English work which places him among the poets of that language was a translation of a portion of the *Æneid* of Virgil, which appeared in the year 1583, under the following title:—“*The first*

* Wood.

four bookes of Virgil's Æneis, translated into English heroicall verse, by Richard Stanyhurst, with other poeticall devises thereunto annexed, at London: imprinted by Henrie Bynneman, dwelling in Thames-street, near unto Baynardes Castell. Anno Dom. 1583."

This, though a very early English translation, had been already preceded by several others. The first was by Caxton; this, however, was rather a compendium than a translation. It was written in prose, and taken, not from the original Latin, but the French. The next was by Gawan Douglas, whose metrical version was finished in 1515, and published at London in 1553. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt also attempted English versions of portions of the Æneid. The former poet in blank verse, a species of metre which he is supposed to have first introduced into English poetry. But the most complete version which had appeared before the time of Stanyhurst was that by Thomas Phayer, the first seven books of which appeared in 1558. The metre which he selected was the fourteen syllable measure, a favourite one in that age, and which was afterwards used with such powerful effect by Chapman, in his translation of the Iliad. Stanyhurst was not so fortunate in his selection of a metre. He, like many other ingenious men and true poets, from Gabriel Harvey to Robert Southey, having expended a great deal of unproductive trouble in endeavouring to adapt the classical measures to the stubborn English dialect. Stanyhurst's translation is now one of the scarcest books in English literature, which is

somewhat extraordinary ; not, however, owing to its merits as a translation, but to the irresistible comicality of its eccentric and most extraordinary phraseology.

The reader will not object to a few specimens of this most whimsical production, which looks very like a burlesque on “the sacred Mantuan book,” and if intended as such would have been most successful. He dedicates it to his brother-in-law, Lord Dunsany, in an address from which we make some extracts :—

*“ To the Right Hon. my very loving brother, the
Lord Baron of Dunsanye.*

“ Having (my good lord) taken upon me to execute some parte of Maister Askam’s will, who, in his golden pamphlet, intituled the ‘ Schoolemaister,’ doth wish the universitie students to applie their wittes in beautifying our Englishe language with heroicall verses, I heed no Latinist so fit to give the onset on as Virgil, who, for his peerless stile and matchlesse stuffe, doth beare the pricke and price among all the Roman poets. Howbeit, I have here halfe a gesse, that two sorts of carpers wil seeme to spurne at this mine enterprise ; the one utterly ignorant, the other meanelly lettered. The ignorant wil imagine that the passage was nothing craggy, in as much as M. Phayer hath broken the ice before me ; the meaner clerks wil suppose my travaile in these heroicall verses to carrie no great difficultie, in that it laye in my choice to make what word I woulde, short or long, having

no English writer before me in this kind of poe-
trie, wyth whose square I shoulde leavel my syl-
lables."

He then enters into a long criticism of his ri-
val's translation, which seems to have dissatisfied
our worthy countryman very much, and concludes
this portion of his dedication in the following
words:—

"Touching mine owne triall, this muche I wil
discover. The three first bookes I translated by
starts, as my leasure and pleasure would serve
me. In the fourth booke I did taske myselfe,
and pursued the matter somewhat hotely. M.
Phayer tooke to the making of that booke fifteen
dayes; I huddled up mine in ten; wherein I
covet no praise, but rather doe crave pardon.
For like as forelittering bitches whelp blinde
puppies, so I may be, perhaps, intwighted of
more haste than good speede, as Sir Thomas
Moore, in like case, gybeth at one that made
vaunt of certaine pild verses clouted up *extrum-
pere*—

Hos quid te scripsisse mones extempore versus?
Nam liber hoc loquitur, te reticente, tuus.

"But to leave that to the verdict of others
(wherein I crave the good liking of the curteous,
and scorne the controlment of the currish, as
those that usually reprehend most, and yet can
amend least) the oddes betweene *verse* and *rythme*
is very greate. For in the one, everie foote,
worde, every syllable, yea, everie letter, is to be
observed: in the other, the last word is onelye

to be heeded ; as is very lively expressed by the lawyer in empaneling a jurie—

Johannes Doa,	Richardus Roa,
Johannes Myles,	Thomas Giles,
Johannes Den,	Willielmus Fen,
Willielmus Neile,	Johannes Sneile,
Johannes Hye,	Thomas Pye,
Richardus Leake,	Johannes Peake.

Happily such curious markers as your lordship is, will accompt this but *rythme dogrel* ; but we may suite it with a more civil word, terming it *rythme peale meale*, it rolleth so roundly in the hearer's eares. And are there not divers skavingers of draftie poetrie in this our age that baste their papers wyth smearie larde, savoring altogether of the frying-pan ? What Tom Towley is so simple that wil not attempt to be a rythmoure ?”

This dedication is valuable, because, says a recent writer, it may be considered as one of the earliest essays on English metrification, and is of such rarity as to have escaped the notice of Dr. Warton and Mr. Malone in their retrospects of our critical literature.* As a specimen of this very curious work we give a fragment, which he translated from the eighth book, or, as he says himself, “done into English by the translator, for his last farewell to the sayd Virgil.”

Towards Sicil is seated to the welkin loftily peaking,
A soil, yclept Liparen, from whence with flounce fury
flinging

* Sir Egerton Brydges, *Censura Literaria*, vol. 1, p. 408.

Stones and burlye bullets, like tampounds mainly be-
towing.

Under is a kennel, where chimneys fiery be scorching
Of Cyclopan tosters, with rent rocks chamfery sharded.
Loud rub-a-dub tabering with frapping rip rap of Ætna,
In the den are drumming gads of steele, parchfulye
sparkling,

And flames fiercyle glowing, from furnace flashye be-
whisking,

Vulcan his hot forgehearth, named eke thee Vulcian Is-
land.

Down from the heav'nlye palace travayled the firye God
hither,

In this cave the rakehels iron bars big bulked are
ham'ring,

Brontes and Steropes, with bare limb swartie Pyracmon.
These three nere upbotching, not shaped, but partly
well onward,

A clapping fire-bolt (such as oft with rounce robel hobble
Jove to the ground clattreth) but yet not finished wholly.

Three showers wringlye wrythen glimmering, and forc-
ibly sowcing,

Three watrye clouds shymring to the craft they ram-
pired hizzing,

Three wherus fierd glystring, with southwind ruffled
huffing,

Now do they raise ghastly lightnings, now grislye re-
bounding

Of ruffe raffe roaring, men's hearts with terrors agrysing,
With peale meale ramping, with thwick thwack sturdily
thundering.

This, with all its extravagance, we consider a
more spirited translation than the corresponding
passage by Dryden. We give the latter, and let
the reader decide. Dryden's version will serve
as a translation of the translation of Stanyhurst:

Sacred to Vulcan's name, an isle there lay,
Betwixt Sicilia's coast and Lipare;
Raised high on smoking rocks; and deep below
In hollow caves the fires of Ætna glow;

The Cyclops here their heavy hammers deal :
 Loud strokes and hissings of tormented steel
 Are heard around ; the boiling waters roar,
 And smoky flames through fuming tunnels soar.
 Hither the father of the fire, by night,
 Through the brown air precipitates his flight,
 On their eternal anvils here be found
 The brethren beating, and the blows go round ;
 A load of pointless thunder now there lies
 Before their hands, to ripen for the skies :
 These darts, for angry Jove, they daily cast,
 Consumed on mortals with prodigious waste.
 Three rays of writhen rain, of fire three more,
 Of winged southern winds and cloudy store,
 As many parts, the dreadful mixture frame ;
 And fears are added and avenging flame.

A passage like that of Stanyhurst, it must be admitted, was too tempting a subject of banter for the wits of that age, and we consequently find it alluded to by several cotemporary writers, particularly by Thomas Nash,* who, in referring to the several translations of Latin works which had appeared up to his time, makes the following allusion to Stanyhurst, and scarcely exaggerates his style :—

“ M. Phaer, likewise, is not to be forgot in regard of his famous Virgil, whose heavenly verse, had it not been blemished by his haughty thoughts, England might have long insulted his wit, and *corrigat qui potest* have been subscribed to his works. But Fortune, the mistress of change, with a pitying compassion, respecting Master Stanihurst's praise, vowed that Phaer should fall, that he might rise, whose heroical

* Preface to Green's Arcadia, London, 1616.

poetry infired, I should say inspired, with a hexameter fury, recalled to life whatever hissed barbarism hath been buried this hundred years; and revived by his ragged quill and carterly variety, as no Hodge ploughman in a country but would have held as the extremity of clownery! a pattern whereof I will propound to your judgments, as near as I can, being part of one of his descriptions of a tempest, which is thus—

Then did he make heaven's vault to rebound
 With rounce robble bobble,
 Of ruffe raffe roaring
 With thwick thwack thurlerie bouncing.

Which strange language of the firmament, never subject before to our common phrase, make us, that are not used to terminate heaven's moving in the accents of any voice, esteem of their triobulare interpreter as of some Thrasonical huff snuff; for so terrible was his style to all mild ears, as would have affrighted our peaceable poet from intermeddling hereafter with that quarrelling kind of verse, had not sweet Master France, by his excellent translation of Master Thomas Watson's sugared Amintas, animated their dulled spirits to such high-witted endeavours.* The reader may not object to a few more detached passages from this singular book. The fall of a Trojan tower is thus described:—

With an horrible hurring
 Pat falls the turret, the Greeks with crash swash it
 heapeth.

* Reprinted in Sir Egerton Brydges' *Archaica*, London, 1815.

The *arma virumque cano* of the first book is thus rendered :—

Now manhood and garboils, I chant, and martial horror;
I blaze thee, Captaine, first from Troy cittie repairing,
Like wandring pilgrim to famosed Italie trudging.

Achates tells Æneas—

Thou seest all cocksure thy fleet, thy companie salved.

Polyphemus is described as

A foul fog monster, great swad, deprived of eye-sight.

In another place “Duke Æneas” is said to have
“goggled his eye-sight wayting for Dido,”
while

Groane sighs deep reaching, with tears his leersful he
blubbered;

and *exoritur clamorque virum, clangorque tubarum* is interpreted,

The townsmen roared, the trump taratantara rattled.

Custos templi Hesperidum is translated “the sexton of Hesperides’ sinagog.” Warton in alluding to this work says, “with all this foolish pedantry Stanyhurst was certainly a scholar. But in this translation he calls *Chorebus*, one of the Trojan chiefs, a *Bedlamite*; he says that old Priam girded on his sword *Morglay*, the name of a sword in the Gothic Romances; that Dido would have been glad to have been brought to bed even of a *Cockney*—a *Dandiprat hoptthumb*—and that Jupiter in kissing his daughter, *bust his pretty prating parrot*.”*

To us these passages have been a source of

* Hist. English Poetry, vol. 3, p. 424.

much amusement, and under the belief that our readers would enjoy them in a similar manner, we have lingered perhaps longer on this work than its literary merits may have required. In justice, however, to Stanyhurst, we must give a few lines from an original poem of his, which, from their intrinsic beauty are really worth preserving; it is one of the "other poetical devises annexed" to his Virgil.

AN ENDEAVOURED DESCRIPTION OF HIS
MISTRESSE.

Her stature is comely, not an inch too superfluous holding.

Gracious is her visage, with a quick eye prettily glancing :

Her lips like coral, ruddy, with teeth lily-white evened,
Young in age, in manners, and nurture, sage she remaineth ;

Bashful in her speaking; not rash, but watchful in answer ;

Her looks, her simpring, her words, with courtesey sweetning,

Kind, and also modest; liking with chastity linking ,

And in all her gestures, observing comely decorum,

But, to what end labour I, me to press with burden of
Ætna,

The stars to number, points plainly impossible opening ?

Whist, not a word, a silence, such task impossible asketh ;

Her virtue meriteth more praise than parly can utter.

The work which has preserved the name of Stanyhurst to the present time, is his "*Descriptio Hiberniæ*," familiar, at least by name, to every reader of Irish History. This work possesses much of the quaintness and eccentricity of his poetry; and, as an authority, is looked upon in a

different point of view, by different writers.—Bishop Nicholson considering parts of it “highly commendable,”* while Keating denounces it in strong language, and states “that he (Stanyhurst) was prejudiced with the rewards and preferments which were promised him to blacken the nation. But that he lived to repent this injustice, and when he had entered into holy orders, promised to recant, publicly, all the falsehoods he had published; and that he (Keating) was credibly informed that a writing was drawn up for that end, in order to be printed in Ireland.”†

This work was translated into English, and published in “Hollingshed’s Chronicles,” vol. 2, London, 1586, folio. With two passages from this book, as prose companions to the metrical selections already made, we shall take our leave of the most learned Richard Stanyhurst, as he was called by Camden, “*Eruditissimus ille nobilis Richardus Stainhurstus.*”

DIFFICULTY OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

“A gentleman of mine acquaintance reporteth that he did see a woman in Rome which was possessed with a babbling spirit, that could have chatted anie language saving the Irish; and that it was so difficult, as the verie divell was gravelled therewith. A gentleman that stood by answered, that he took the speech to be so sacred and holie, that no damned fiend had the power

* Irish Historical Library, p. 3.

† Harris’s Ware.

to speak it no more than they are able to saie (as the report goeth) the verse of Saint John the Evangelist, *et verbum caro factum est*. Naie, by God his mercie, man (quoth the other), I stand in doubt (I tell you) whether the apostles, in their copious mart of languages at Jerusalem, could have spoken Irish if they were apposed; whereat the companie heartilie laughed.”*

THE VIRTUES OF AQUA VITÆ.

“Being moderately taken (saith he†) it sloweth age, it strengtheneth youth, it helpeth digestion, it cutteth flegme, it abandoneth melancholie, it relisheth the heart, it lighteneth the mind, it quickeneth the spirits, it cureth the hydropsie, it healeth the strangurie, it pounceth the stone, it expelleth gravel, it puffeth awaie all ventositie, it keepeth and preserveth the head from whirling, the eyes from dazeling, the tong from lispings, the mouth from maffling, the teeth from chattering, and the throte from ratling; it keepeth the weasan from stifling, the stomach from wambling, and the heart from swelling; the bellie from wirtching, the guts from rumbling, the hands from shivering, the sinews from shrinking, the veins from crumpling, the bones from aking, and the marrow from soaking. Ulstadius also ascribeth thereto singular praise, and would have it burn, being kindled, which he taketh to be a token to know the goodness thereof; and trulie it is a sovereign liquor, if it be orderlie taken.”‡

* Page. 12.

† One Theoricus, from whom he is quoting.

‡ Page 13.

LODOWICK BARRY.

1611.

LODOWICK BARRY published, in 1611, a comedy called "*Ram Alley ; or, Merrie Tricks.*" There is scarcely anything known with certainty concerning the events of this writer's life, except that he was of an ancient and honourable family in Ireland, and flourished about the middle of the reign of James the First. Wood (*Athenæ Oxon.* 2, 655) calls him *Lord* Barry, a mistake which has been copied by Horace Walpole* and other writers. From the frequent allusions to the Inns of Court in London throughout his play, and the severe witticisms in which he indulges at the expense of these venerable localities, there is a strong probability that Barry was a student in one of them.

The title page of the first edition of his comedy runs thus—" *Ram Alley ; or, Merrie Tricks, a comedy divers times heretofore acted by the children of the King's revels. Written by Lo. Barry. At London, Printed by G. Eld, for Robert Wilson, and are to be sold at his shop in Holborne, at the new gate of Graye's-Inn, 1611, 4to.*" It was republished in 1636 ; revived as an acting play at Drury-lane Theatre, 1723;† and was

* Royal and Noble Authors.

† "English Stage," vol. 3, p. 134.

again republished in 1780, in the fifth vol. of Dodsley's Old Plays. The plot of the comedy is this—William Smallshanks is a wild young man, who had mortgaged his small estate to a lawyer called Throate. With the assistance of his friend, Boutcher, he pretends to have ran away with the daughter of Lady Sommerfield, who is a rich heiress. He brings a courtezan to Throate as the heiress. Throate prevails on her to marry him instead of Smallshanks, but in order to compound the matter he restores to Smallshanks his mortgage. Constantia, the real heiress, is in love with Boutcher, and follows him as his page. At the conclusion they are married.* There is an under plot, in which Taffeta, a mercer's widow, agrees to marry Sir Oliver Smallshanks. This is prevented by the manœuvering of his son William, who succeeds in marrying the widow. The scene in which Throate, believing that he had married the daughter of Lady Sommerfield, pays a visit to his supposed mother-in-law, is written with a good deal of comic power, and may serve as a specimen of the entire—

LADY SOMMERFIELD—JUSTICE TUTCHIN.

Enter Serving-man.

Serving-man. Here's a gentleman much desirous to see you, madam.

Lady Sommerfield. What is he for a man?

Serving-man. Nothing for a man, but much for a beast; I think him lunatick, for he demands
What plate of his is stirring in th' house.

* “English Stage,” vol. 3, p. 135.

He calls your men his butlers, cooks, and steward,
Kisses your women, and makes exceeding much
Of your coachman's wife.

Justice Tutchin. Then he's a gentleman;
For 'tis a true note of a gentleman
To make much of other men's wives—bring him up.

Enter Serving-man and Throate.

Serving-man. That's my lady.

Throate. For that thou first hast brought me to her
sight,

I here create thee clerk of the kitchen,
No man shall beg it from thee.

Serving-man. Sure the fellow's mad.

Lady Sommerfield. What would you, sir? I guess your
long profession
By your scant suit: your habit seems to turn
Your inside outward to me; y' are, I think,
Some turner of the law.

Throate. Law is my living,
And on that ancient mould I wear this outside;
Suit upon suit wastes some, yet makes me thrive,
First law, then gold, then love, and then we wive.

Justice Tutchin. A man of form like me; but what's
your business?

Lady Sommerfield. Be brief, good sir; what makes
this bold intrusion?

Throate. Intrude, I do not, for I know the law,
It is the rule that squares out all our actions;
Those actions bring in coin, coin gets me friends;
Your son-in-law hath law at's fingers ends.

Lady Sommerfield. My son-in-law!

Throate. Madam, your son-in-law;
Mother, I come (be glad I call you so)
To make a gentle breach into your favour,
And win your approbation of my choice;
Your cherry-ripe sweet daughter (so renown'd
For beauty, virtue, and a wealthy dower)
I have espous'd.

Lady Sommerfield. How? You espouse my daughter?

Throate. *Noverint universi.* the laws of heaven,

Of nature, church, and chance, have made her mine,
Therefore deliver her by these presents.

Justice Tutchin. How's this? Made her yours, sir? *per quam regulam?*

Nay, we are lettered, sir, as well as you,
Redde rationem, per quam regulam.

Throate. *Femini ludificantur viros:*

By that same rule these lips have taken seizin;
Tut, I do all by statute law and reason.

Lady Sommerfield. Hence, you base knave! you pettyfogging groom!

Clad in old ends, and pieced with brokery:
You wed my daughter!

Justice Tutchin. You, Sir Ambo-dexter,
A summer's son, and learn'd in Norfolk wiles,
Some common bail, or Counter lawyer,
Marry my niece! Your half-sleeves shall not carry her.

Throate. These storms will be dissolv'd in tears of joy;
Mother, I doubt it not: Justice to you
That jerk at my half-sleeves, and yet yourself
Do never wear but buckram out of sight;
A flannel waist-coat, or a canvass truss,
A shift of thrift I use it; let's be friends;
You know the law has tricks, ka me, ka thee.
Viderit utilitas, the motto: these half-arms,
Corpus cum causa, need no bombasting,
We wear small hair, yet have we tongue and wit;
Lawyers close-breech'd have bodies politic.

Lady Sommerfield. Speak, answer me, Sir Jack; stole you my daughter?

Throate. Short tale to make, I fingered have your daughter;

I have ta'en livery and seisin of the wench,
Deliver her then, you know the statute laws,
She's mine without exception, bar, or clause;
Come, come, restore.

Lady Sommerfield. The fellow's mad, I think.

Throate. I was not mad before I married;
But, *ipso facto*, what the act may make me,
That know I not.

Justice Tutchin. Fellows, come in there.

Enter two or three Servants.

By this, sir, you confess you stole my niece,
And I attach you here of felony :
Lay hold on him : I'll make my mittimus,
And send him to the gaol. Have we no bar
Nor clause to hamper you ? Away with him,
Those claws shall claw you to a bar of shame,
Where thou shalt shew thy goll.* I'll bar your claim,
If I be Justice Tutchin.

Throate. Hands off ! you slaves ;
Oh ! favour my jerkin, though you tear my flesh.
I set more store by that ; my *Audita*
Querela shall be heard, and with a *certiorari*
I'll fetch her from you.

N. B.—“Ram-Alley” is situated near the Temple,
London, and seems to have been part of Alsatia.

* Hand.

SIR JOHN DENHAM.

BORN 1615—DIED 1668.

SIR JOHN DENHAM was born in Dublin, in the year 1615. He was the only son of Sir John Denham, Chief Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, and one of the Lords Justices. His mother was a native of this country, being one of the daughters of Sir Garret More, sometime Baron of Mellifont. On the removal of Sir John Denham from the Irish to the English Court of Exchequer, in 1617, young Denham was sent over to England, and was entered of Trinity College, Oxford, in the year 1631, in his sixteenth year. His collegiate career was not very brilliant, and being looked upon, says Wood,* as a slow and dreaming young man, by his seniors and contemporaries, and given more to cards and dice, than his study, they could never then, in the least imagine, that he could ever enrich the world with his fancy, or issue of his brain, as he afterwards did.

After taking his degree of B. A., at Oxford, he repaired to London, and entered himself as a student in Lincoln's Inn, where, according to the same authority, "though he followed his study very close, to the appearance of all persons, yet, he would game much, and frequent the company

* "Athenæ Oxonienses," vol. 3, p. 823.

of the unsanctified crew of gamesters, who rook'd him sometimes of all he could wrap or get." He abandoned this vice for sometime, in consequence of the remonstrance of his father, but, after his death he relapsed again, and lost several thousand pounds which had been left him. Besides gaming, he had occasionally some other resources to enliven his student life; of these, the following may be given as an instance:—Aubrey* mentions that "he was generally temperate as to drinking, but, one time when he was a student at Lincoln's Inn, having being merry at the tavern with his comerades, late at night, a frolick came into his head to gett a playsterers brush, and a pott of inke, and blot out all the signs between Temple-barre and Charing-cross, which made a strange confusion the next day, and 'twas in terme time. But, it happened that they were discovered, and it cost him and them some moneys. This I had from R. Estcourt, Esq., that carried the inke pott."

In the latter end of the year 1641, he published his tragedy called "The Sophy," which was very successful, and from his habits and character, quite unexpected. The poet Waller said of him, that he broke out like the Irish Rebellion, three score thousand strong, when nobody was aware, or in the least suspected it.

He was faithful to the fortunes of Charles the First, and was entrusted with the duty of carrying on the king's correspondence. On the death of that unfortunate monarch, he shared the

* MS. Lives in the Asmole Museum, quoted by Wood.

exile of the remaining members of the royal family, and, of course, returned with them to England, at the restoration.

In 1643, being at the court of Charles the First, at Oxford, he published his most celebrated poem, "Cooper's Hill." Denham died at Whitehall, in March, 1668, and was interred in Westminster Abbey, near the tombs of Chaucer, Spenser, and Cowley.

Denham was the first writer who gave to the heroic couplet that peculiar evenness of harmony, which Waller, Dryden, and Pope carried to such perfection. Many of Denham's couplets have the strength of Dryden, as well as the pointed antithesis of Pope, of which the following celebrated example may be given—comparing his own poetry to the Thames, he says:—

O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep, yet clear: though gentle, yet not dull:
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

Dr. Johnson concludes his estimate of the merits of Denham in these words:—"He is one of the writers that improved our taste and advanced our language, and whom we ought, therefore, to read with gratitude." A greater poet, and a better judge of poetry than Dr. Johnson, has also expressed his admiration of Denham. Pope, in his Windsor Forest, thus alludes to him:—

Bear me, oh! bear me to sequester'd scenes,
The bowery mazes, and surrounding greens:
To Thames's banks, which fragrant breezes fill,
Or where the muses sport on Cooper's-Hill.
On Cooper's-Hill eternal wreaths shall grow
While lasts the mountain, or while Thames shall flow:

Here his first lays majestic DENHAM sung:
 There the last numbers flow'd from Cowley's tongue.
 Who now shall charm the shades where Cowley strung
 His living harp, and lofty Denham sung?

*Description of the Thames from "Cooper's-Hill."**

My eye descending from the hill, surveys
 Where Thames among the wanton valleys strays:
 Thames! the most loved of all the ocean's sons
 By his old sire, to his embraces runs,
 Like mortal life to meet eternity:
 Though with those streams he no resemblance hold,
 Whose foam is amber, and their gravel gold:
 His genuine and less guilty wealth t' explore,
 Search not his bottom, but survey his shore,
 O'er which he kindly spreads his spacious wing,
 And hatches plenty for th' ensuing spring:
 Nor then destroys it with too fond a stay,
 Like mothers which their infants overlay:
 Nor with a sudden and impetuous wave,
 Like profuse kings, resumes the wealth he gave.
 No unexpected inundations spoil
 The mower's hopes, nor mock the ploughman's toil;
 But God-like his unwearied bounty flows;
 First loves to do, then loves the good he does.
 Nor are his blessings to his banks confined,
 But free and common as the sea or wind:
 When he, to boast or to disperse his stores,
 Full of the tributes of his grateful shores,
 Visits the world, and in his flying tours
 Brings home to us, and makes both Indies ours;
 Finds wealth where 'tis, bestows it where it wants,
 Cities in deserts, woods in cities plants.
 So that to us no thing, no place is strange,
 While his fair bosom is the world's exchange.
 O, could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
 My great example, as it is my theme:
 Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull:
 Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

* Cooper's-Hill is in the parish of Egham, in Surrey, above Richmond, and commands a very noble prospect.

ROGER BOYLE, EARL OF ORRERY.

BORN 1621—DIED 1679.

THE life of this celebrated person in the “*Biographia Britannica*” commences thus: “Roger Boyle, earl of Orrery, younger son of Richard, earl of Burlington and Cork, and fifth son of Richard, styled the great earl of Cork, independent of descent and titles, one of the most learned, able, and valiant persons of the age in which he lived, and thereby *a great instrument of good to his country and nation.*” An Irish reader who would express the slightest scepticism upon the concluding portion of this sentence, and an Irish writer who would presume to assert that such services as the Earl of Orrery was too ready to offer to his country, deserve to be remembered with execration instead of gratitude, would be regarded by our friends at the other side of the channel as very ignorant or very eccentric persons, who were totally unworthy of the enlightened age in which, by mistake, they happen to live. That Lord Broghill (the early title of the Earl of Orrery) was a brave soldier, an astute statesman, a wily tactician, and an insinuating courtier, quick in resources, and ingenious in stratagems, the friend and patron of literary men, and himself a writer of no mean rank—all these things may be freely admitted.

His countrymen, however, cannot forget that the same man was the murderer of the heroic and patriotic Bishop of Ross, on the 10th of May, 1650, before the castle of Carraig-an-Droichid;* that he poured his calumnious poison into the ready ears of the ungrateful Charles I., and the ungrateful Charles II., against “the Irish Papists;” that he was the pioneer of Oliver Cromwell in his bloodiest march over the island, and that he was the associate of Ireton. Of his ability there can be no doubt. A man who could be the friend of the different persons we have mentioned; who could pay court to Charles I. at Oxford, relieve Cromwell at Clonmel, form one of the privy council of his son Richard, and take a leading part in the restoration of Charles II., must have been no ordinary character. It would appear that they all trusted him, and that he betrayed none of them.

He was born at Lismore, in the county of Waterford, on the 21st day of April, 1621, and was created Lord Boyle, baron of Broghill, when eight years of age. He was educated at the University of Dublin, and was sent in his eighteenth year to make the tour of France and Italy. His brother, Lord Kynalmeaky, accompanied him, and it is mentioned that the brothers had the pleasure of seeing Louis XIV. a child in his nurse’s arms. Upon his return he married the Lady Margaret Howard, daughter to the Earl of Suffolk, and shortly after plunged into

* For a ballad on this subject, by Dr. Madden, see “The Spirit of the Nation,” p. 305.

public life both in England and Ireland. In this country, from that period till the Restoration of Charles II., and for many years after, he is mixed up with all the important and disastrous events that occurred.

Finding that another order of things had arisen, under the auspices of the merry monarch, and that the ready pen of the wit was more pleasing to his new master than the hacked sword of the old soldier, Oliver's favourite captain, with his usual versatility, became the dramatic poet of Charles II., and for the future, instead of making real tragedies, was content with writing fictitious ones. He became a wit, and a patron of wits; was the friend of Sir John Suckling and Sir William Davenant; received dedications from Dryden, and wrote elegies on Cowley; and composed eight plays, which were very well received by his cotemporaries, and which have since been considered worthy of being republished.

The first of these was "*The History of Henry the Fifth*:" London, 1688, fol. This was brought out at the King's Theatre, by Sir William Davenant. The king attended, and the principal performers appeared in the coronation robes of the different members of the royal family.

The second was "*Mustapha, the Son of Solyman, the Magnificent*," a tragedy: London, 1667, fol. and 1668. This play was also well received, and contains some admirable scenes.

The third was "*The Black Prince*," a tragedy: London, 1672, fol.

The fourth was "*Tryphon*," a tragedy: London, 1672, fol. The story is taken from Jose-

phus, and it is written, like the other plays, in rhyme. It was acted with great success at the Duke of York's Theatre.

These plays were collected and published together in folio in 1690, and fill the first volume of Lord Orrery's dramatic works, republished in 1739 by Dodsley. His other plays were not published during his life time. They consist of

First—" *Mr. Anthony*," a comedy: London, 1692, 4to. This is not included in Dodsley's edition.

Second—" *Guzman*," a comedy: London, 1693, 4to; written in imitation of the Spanish dramatists.

Third—" *Herod the Great*," a tragedy: London, 1694, 4to.

And fourth—" *Altimere*," a tragedy, which was brought upon the stage in 1702.

In addition to these, he wrote some occasional poems, and a romance, called " *Parthenissa*," in three vols. fol.: London, 1677.

Lord Orrery, as a dramatic writer, does not appear to have been allowed his proper merit by posterity. Horace Walpole says of him, that he was a man who never made a bad figure, but as an author; while a cotemporary of Lord Orrery's writes, that he was a great poet, great statesman, great soldier, and great everything which merits the name of great or good. Truth, as usual, lies between such extreme assertions as these. The use of rhyme in dramatic composition has never been permanently popular with the English-speaking public, though the classical metre in France and Spain. Dryden, as a dramatic

poet, has scarcely survived his unfortunate partiality for rhyme. Lord Orrery wrote his plays while suffering under the gout, which circumstance was, as usual, turned to the best account by Dryden, in the dedication of his play, "*The Rival Ladies*," to his lordship. "Glorious" and flattering "John,"—thus writes: "For who could so severely judge of faults, as he who has given testimony he commits none? Your excellent poems have afforded that knowledge of it to the world, that your enemies are ready to upbraid you with it, as a crime for a man of business to write so well. Neither durst I have justified your lordship in it, if examples of it had not been in the world before you. If Xenophon had not written a romance, and a certain Roman, called Augustus Cæsar, a tragedy and epigrams. But their writing was the entertainment of their pleasure: yours is only a diversion of your pain. The muses have seldom employed your thoughts, but when some violent fit of the gout has snatched you from affairs of state; and, like the priestess of Apollo, you never come to deliver his oracles, but unwillingly and in torment. So that we are obliged to your lordship's misery for our delight: you treat us with the cruel pleasure of a Turkish triumph, when those, who cut and wound their bodies, sing songs of victory as they pass, and divert others with their own sufferings,"* &c. Cowley, Davenant, and Suckling, also wrote praises of his lordship, but in verse, as may be seen in their works. As specimens of Lord Or-

* Dryden's Works, Scott's Edition. vol. 2, p. 115.

rery's powers, as a poet, we print two poems, one his celebrated lines on the death of Cowley and the other a subject generally selected by lyrical poets—the praise of wine:—

On the Death of Mr. Abraham Cowley, and his Burial in Westminster Abbey.

Our wit, till Cowley did its lustre raise,
May be resembled to the first three days;
In which did shine, only such streaks of light,
As served but to distinguish day from night:
But wit breaks forth in all that he has done,
Like light, when 'twas united to the sun.

The poets formerly did lie in wait
To rifle those whom they would imitate:
We watch'd to rob all strangers when they writ,
And learn'd their language but to steal their wit.
He from that need his country does redeem,
Since those who want may be supplied from him:
And foreign nations now may borrow more
From Cowley, than we could from them before:
Who, though he condescended to admit
The Greeks and Romans for his guides in wit,
Yet he those ancient poets does pursue,
But as the Spaniards great Columbus do:
He taught them first to the new world to steer,
But they possess all that is precious there.

When first his spring of wit began to flow,
It raised in some, wonder and sorrow too—
That God has so much wit and knowledge lent,
And that they were not in his praises spent.

But those who in his Davideis look,
Find they his blossoms for his fruit mistook,
In diff'ring ages, different muses shined :
His green did charm the sense, his ripe the mind.

Writing for heaven, he was inspired from thence,
And from his theme derived his influence ;
The Scriptures will no more the wicked fright,
His muse does make religion a delight.

Oh ! how severely man is used by fate !
The covetous toil long for an estate :
And having got more than their life can spend,
They may bequeath it to a son or friend.
But learning (in which none can have a share,
Unless they climb to it by time and care),
Learning, the truest wealth a man can have,
Does with the body perish in the grave ;
To tenements of clay it is confined,
Though 'tis the noblest purchase of the mind.
Oh ! why can we thus leave our friend possess'd
Of all our acquisitions but the best !—
Still when we study Cowley, we lament
That to the world he was no longer lent :
Who like a lightning to our eyes was shown,
So bright he shin'd and was so quickly gone :
Sure, he rejoiced to see his flame expire,
Since he himself could not have raised it higher :
For when wise poets can no longer fly,
They would like saints in their perfections die.

Though beauty some affection in him bred,
Yet only sacred learning he would wed,
By which th' illustrious offspring of his brain
Shall over wit's great empire ever reign :

His works shall live when pyramids of pride
Shrink to such ashes as they long did hide.

That sacrilegious fire (which did last year,
Level those piles which piety did rear),
Dreaded near that majestic church to fly,
Where English kings and English poets lie.

It at an awful distance did expire,
Such power had sacred ashes o'er that fire,
Such as it durst not near that structure come
Which fate had ordered to be Cowley's tomb.

And 'twill be still preserved by being so,
From what the rage of future flames can do:
Material fire dares not that place infest,
Where he who had immortal flame does rest.

There let his urn remain, for it was fit
Amongst our kings, to lay the king of wit,
By which the structure more renown'd will prove
For that part bury'd, than for all above.

The Earl of Orrery, as we have stated, wrote a large romance, printed in folio, and divided into six parts, called *Parthenissa*. The sixth and last part was written by the particular command of Henrietta Maria, duchess of Orleans, and daughter to King Charles the First, to whom it was dedicated. The last piece he composed is entitled "Poems on most of the Festivals of the Church." His preface to this work begins thus:—"God, of his abundant mercy, having convinced me how much precious time I had

cast away in airy verse, I have resolved to take a final leave of that sort of poetry, and, in some degree to repair the unhappiness and fault of what was past, to dedicate my muse for the future entirely to sacred subjects." This work he began the year before he died but never finished: the fragment has been printed and published. We take leave of the Earl of Orrery with an Anacreontic, attributed to Lord Broghill in Lawe's Ayres and Dialogues, 1653.

THE EXCELLENCY OF WINE.

'Tis wine that inspires
And quencheth love's fires,
Teaches fools how to rule a state:
Mayds ne'er did approve it,
Because those that love it,
Despise and laugh at their hate.

The drinkers of beer
Did ne'er yet appear
In matters of any weight:
'Tis he whose design
Is quickened by wine,
That raises wit to its height.

We then should it prize,
For never black eyes
Made wounds that this could not heale:
Who then doth refuse
To drink of the juice
Is a foe to the common weale.

WENTWORTH DILLON, EARL OF
ROSCOMMON.

BORN 1633—DIED 1684.

WENTWORTH DILLON, Earl of Roscommon, was one of the most celebrated poets of the reign of Charles the Second. He has the still higher honour of being the only moral writer of that licentious period, which has been thus celebrated by Pope—

In all Charles' days,
Roscommon only boasts unspotted lays.

He was nephew of the celebrated Earl of Strafford, and was born in Ireland, in 1633, during the lieutenancy of his uncle. At the commencement of the prosecution against Lord Strafford, he was sent, by advice of Archbishop Usher, to Caen, in Normandy, where he studied under the famous Bochart; after which he travelled into Italy, and resided at Rome for several years, where he became perfect in the language and antiquities of that country. Upon his return to England, he was appointed captain of the band of pensioners, which led him into extravagance, and induced a passion for gaming. To escape from embarrassments arising from both these causes; he retired to Ireland. Upon his return, he married Frances, daughter to the Earl of Burlington.

and was appointed master of the horse to the Duchess of York. From this period until his death he devoted himself a good deal to literary pursuits. Among other literary associations, he projected the plan of one modelled upon that of the Italian Society, for refining the English language, and fixing its standard. These projects were interrupted by the contentions which were approaching, and which Roscommon had the sagacity to foresee. Thinking it better, as he himself said, "to sit near the chimney when the chamber smoked," he was about proceeding to Rome, when he was seized by a fit of the gout, which being improperly treated by a French empiric, terminated fatally. He died in January, 1684, at his house, near St. James's, and was buried with great pomp in Wesminster Abbey.

His works consist of "*A Treatise on Translated Verse*:" London, 1680; and several miscellaneous poems and translations, the principal of which is his version of "*Horace's Art of Poetry*:" London, 1684. Dr. Johnson, while he considers that much of the cotemporary praise which Roscommon received was ascribable at least as much to his rank as to his genius, acknowledges that he was the most correct writer of English verse before Addison. He is elegant, (he says,) but not great; he never labours after exquisite beauties, and he seldom falls into gross faults; his versification is smooth, but rarely vigorous, and his rhymes are remarkably exact.—He improved taste, if he did not enlarge knowledge, and may be numbered among the benefactors of English literature.

We print two poems of Roscommon, as specimens of his powers as an original writer and a translator—one, his "*Ode upon Solitude*," and the other, his beautiful version of one of the finest hymns of the Catholic church, the "*Dies Iræ*." When dying, he repeated with great devotion, the following lines of this hymn—

My God, my Father, and my friend,
Do not forsake me at my end.

ODE UPON SOLITUDE.

Hail! sacred solitude! from this calm bay
I view the world's tempestuous sea,
And with wise pride despise
All those senseless vanities:
With pity moved for others cast away,
On rocks of hopes and fears I see them toss'd,
On rocks of folly and of vice I see them lost.
Some, the prevailing malice of the great,
Unhappy men, or adverse fate,
Sunk deep into the gulfs of an afflicted state;
But more—far more—a numberless, prodigious train,
Whilst Virtue courts them—but, alas! in vain—
Fly from her kind embracing arms,
Deaf to her fondest call, blind to her greatest charms,
And, sunk in pleasures and in brutish ease,
They, in their shipwreck'd state, themselves obdurate
please.

Hail, sacred solitude! soul of my soul!
It is by thee I truly live:
Thou dost a better life and nobler vigour give:
Dost each unruly appetite control:
Thy constant quiet fills my peaceful breast
With unmix'd joy, uninterrupted rest.
Presuming love does ne'er invade
This private solitary shade,
And with fantastic wounds, by beauty made;
The joy has no allay of jealousy, hope, and fear:
The solid comforts of this happy sphere.

Yet I exalted Love admire—

Friendship, abhorring sordid gain,
And purified from lust's dishonest stain ;
Nor is it for my solitude unfit,
For I am with my friend alone,
As if we were but one.

'Tis the polluted love that multiplies,
But friendship does two souls in one comprise.

Here, in a full and constant tide, doth flow
All blessings man can hope to know.
Here, in a deep recess of thought, we find
Pleasures which entertain, and which exalt the mind—
Pleasures which do from friendship and from knowledge
rise,
Which make us happy, as they make us wise.
Here may I always, on this downy grass,
Unknown, unseen, my easy minutes pass ;
Till with a gentle force victorious Death
My solitude invade,
And, stopping for a while my breath,
With ease convey me to a better shade.

ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

The day of wrath, that dreadful day,
Shall the whole world in ashes lay,
As David and the Sybils say.

What horror will invade the mind
When the strict Judge, who would be kind,
Shall have few venial faults to find !

The last loud trumpet's wondrous sound
Shall through the rending tombs rebound,
And wake the nations under ground.

Nature and Death shall, with surprise,
Behold the pale offender rise,
And view the Judge with conscious eyes.

Then shall, with universal dread,
The sacred mystic book be read,
To try the living and the dead.

The Judge ascends his awful throne:
He makes each secret sin be known;
And all with shame confess their own.

O, then! what interest shall I make,
To save my last important stake,
When the most just have cause to quake?

Thou mighty, formidable King!
Thou mercy's unexhausted spring!
Some comfortable pity bring!

Forget not what my ransom cost:
Nor let my dear-bought soul be lost—
In storms of guilty terror toss'd.

Thou, who for me didst feel such pain—
Whose precious blood the cross did stain—
Let not those agonies be vain!

Thou, whom avenging powers obey,
Cancel my debt (too great to pay)
Before the sad accounting day.

Surrounded with amazing fears,
Whose load my soul with anguish bears,
I sigh, I weep; accept my tears.

Thou who wert moved with Mary's grief,
 And by absolving of the thief,
 Has given me hope, now give relief.

Reject not my unworthy prayer;
 Preserve me from that dangerous snare
 Which death and gaping hell prepare;

Give my exalted soul a place
 Among thy chosen right-hand race,
 The sons of God, and heirs of grace.

From that insatiable abyss,
 Where flames devour, and serpents hiss,
 Promote me to thy seat of bliss.

Prostrate, my contrite heart I rend,
 My God, my Father, and my Friend,
 Do not forsake me in my end!

Well may they curse their second breath,
 Who rise to a reviving death;
 Thou great Creator of mankind,
 Let guilty man compassion find!

RICHARD FLECKNOE.

DIED 1678.

THIS writer, who, under the name of Mac Flecknoe, has been damned to everlasting fame in Dryden's celebrated satire upon Shadwell, is, perhaps, entitled to a place in this volume, as the "best abused" poet who has ever written in the English language. From the extreme scarcity of his works, and the total oblivion into which they have fallen, we are not in a satisfactory position to decide, with what justice he

In prose and verse, was owned, without dispute,
Through all the realms of Nonsense—absolute.

But, we are satisfied, if the great body of his writings at all resembled the few fragments we have been able to discover, that in his case the verdict of posterity has been pronounced contrary to evidence. Flecknoe, however, had three great faults which in England, at all times, require genius of a very high order to overcome—he was poor, he was a Catholic priest, and he was an Irishman! Need we wonder then at the ease with which this presumptuous scribbler was run down, and the mock homage which he has ever since received from posterity, as the anointed "Prince of Dulness." In some curious lines by

Marvel, descriptive of Flecknoe, when at Rome, the national intolerance of poverty and consequent leanness in the individual, is strikingly displayed. Marvel should have headed his description with the words of Julius Cæsar, "Would he were fatter."

FLECKNOE, AN ENGLISH PRIEST, AT ROME.

Obliged by frequent visits of this man,
Whom—as a priest, poet, musician—
I for some branch of Melchizedec took,
Though he derives himself from my Lord Brook.
I sought his lodging, which is at the sign
Of the sad Pelican, subject divine
For poetry. There three stair-cases high,
Which signifies his triple property—
I found at last a chamber, as 'twas said,
But seemed a coffin set on the stairs head,
Not higher than seven, nor larger than three feet;
There neither was a ceiling, nor a sheet,
Save that the ingenious door did, as you come,
Turn in, and show to wainscot half the room:
Yet, of his state, no man could have complained,
There being no bed where he entertained;
And, though, within this cell so narrow pent,
He'd stanzas for a whole appartement.

* * * *

This basso relieveo of a man,
Who as a camel tall, yet easily can
The needle's eye thread without any stitch:
His only impossible is to be rich.
Lest his too subtle body, growing rare,
Should leave his soul to wander in the air,
He, therefore, circumscribes himself in rhymes,
And, swaddled in's own paper seven times,
Bears a close jacket of poetic buff,
With which he doth his third dimension stuff.
Thus armed underneath, he over all
Doth make a primitive sotana fall:

And over that, yet casts an antique cloak,
 Worn at the first council of Antioch,
 Which by the Jews long hid and disesteemed,
 He heard of by tradition, and redeemed:
 But were he not in this black habit decked,
 This half transparent man would soon reflect
 Each colour that he past by, and be seen
 As the cameleon, yellow, blue, or green.

Now, let us judge for ourselves as to his merits as a writer. In 1665 he published a work under this title, "*Sixty-nine Enigmatical characters all drawn to the life, from several persons, humours, dispositions : pleasant and full of delight. The second edition, by the Author R. F., Esquire : London, printed by William Crook, at the sign of the Three Bibles, on Fleet-bridge, 1665.*" He inscribed this work, in a short dedication, to Beatrix, duchess of Lorraine, to which he signed his name Rich. Flecknoe.—That all his cotemporaries did not regard him in the light that Dryden and Marvel represented him, is clear from the following lines prefixed to his "Characters," and written by no less a person than the Duke of Newcastle.

TO HIS WORTHY FRIEND, MR. RICHARD FLECK-
 NOE, UPON HIS "CHARACTERS."

Flecknoe ! thy "Characters" are so full of wit
 And fancy, as each word is throng'd with it :
 Each line's a volume ; and who reads would swear,
 Whole libraries were in each Character.
 Nor arrows in a quiver stuck, nor yet
 Lights in the starry skies are thicker set,
 Nor quills upon the armed porcupine,
 Than Wit and Fancy in this work of thine.

W. NEWCASTLE.

The "Characters" are principally written in prose. He has, however, written one in poetry, which alone ought to be sufficient to rescue Flecknoe from the critical purgatory in which he has been suffering for two centuries.

OF A NATURAL BEAUTY.

Whether a cheerful air does rise,
 And elevate her fairer eyes :
 Or a pensive heaviness
 Her lovely eyelids does depress :
 Still the same becoming grace
 Accompanies her eye and face.
 Still you'd think that habit best,
 To which her count'nance last was drest.
 Poor Beauties ! when a blush or glance
 Can sometimes make look fair, by chance,
 Or curious dress, or artful care,
 Can make seem fairer than they are.
 Give me the eyes, give me the face,
 To which no art can add a grace :
 Give me the looks, no garbe nor dress
 Can ever make more fair, or less.

In Dryden's "Mac Flecknoe," Shadwell, "mature in dulness from his tender years," is given as the "perfect image" of our poet. That Flecknoe, however, was not "a dull fellow," may be seen from his description of one :—

A DULL FELLOW.

"He is the mute of the company, and only

* Sir Egerton Brydges' "Restituta," vol. 4, p. 440.

plays a part in the dumb show : or if he say anything, like a pump he labours for it, and presently his spirits sink down again and leave him dry. He sits nodding in company, like a sleepy person over watcht ; and rouse him with a question, he stares on you like one newly-awakened out of sleep. He looks with his mouth, and thinks you would sell him a bargain : ask him anything and 'tis impossible to ask him anything he understands. If he be bookish withal, he is yet the greater dunce : being just like a narrow neckt bottle hastily turned downward. Like a dull horse, let him go on his own pace, and he advances somewhat : but spur him, and, through diffidence of his strength, his wit fails, tongue shuffles, falters, trips, and falls flat down at last, never arriving at a period."

The circumstances of Flecknoe's life are enveloped in much obscurity. "It appears," says Sir Walter Scott, "that he either laid aside or disguised his spiritual character, when he returned to England : but he still preserved extensive connections with the Roman Catholic nobility and gentry."* In addition to his other writings, Flecknoe composed four plays ; namely, "Damoiselles a la Mode ;" "Erminia ;" "Love's Dominion ;" and "Love's Kingdom ;" none of these were acted but the last. To this play Flecknoe subjoined a remarkable discourse upon the English stage. It is one of the earliest and most valuable essays of the kind in the English

* Scott's "Dryden," vol. 10, p. 442.

language ; and was considered by Langbaine to have been the best thing Flecknoe ever wrote. Prefixed to "Love's Kingdom," is the following prologue :—

THE PROLOGUE.

(Spoken by Venus, from the clouds.)

If ever you have heard of Venus' name,
 Goddess of beauty, I that Venus am :
 Who have to-day descended from my sphere,
 To welcome you unto "Love's Kingdom" here ;
 Or rather to my sphere am come, since I
 Am present nowhere more—nor in the sky,
 Nor any island in the world than this,
 That wholly from the world divided is ;
 For Cupid, you behold him here in me,
 (For there, where Beauty is, Love needs must be,)
 Or you may yet more easily descry
 Him 'mong the ladies, in each amorous eye ;
 And, 'mongst the gallants, may as easily trace
 Him to their bosoms, from each beauteous face.
 May then, fair ladies, you
 Find all your servants true ;
 And, gallants, may you find
 The ladies all as kind,
 As by your noble favours you declare
 How much you friends unto "Love's Kingdom" are ;
 Of which yourselves compose so great a part,
 In your fair eyes, and in your loving heart.

EXTEMPORE IN PRAISE OF DRINKING WINE.*

The fountains drink caves subterrene,
The rivulets drink the fountains dry
Brooks drink those rivulets again,
And them some river gliding by—
Until some gulf o' th' sea drink them,
And th' ocean drinks up that again.

Of th' ocean then does drink the sky,
When, having brew'd it into rain,
The earth with drink it does supply,
And plants do drink up that again;
When turn'd to liquor in the vine,
'Tis our turn next to drink the wine.

By this who does not plainly see,
How down our throats at once is hurled
(Whilst merrily we drinking be)
The quintessence of all the world.
Whilst all drink, then, in land, air, sea,
Let us, too, drink as well as they.

* Ellis's Specimens, vol. 3, p. 306.

NAHUM TATE.

BORN 1652—DIED 1715.

NAHUM Tate, another favourite target for the arrows of satire, he being to Pope almost what Flecknoe had been to Dryden, was born in Dublin, in the year 1652. He received his early education at Belfast, and entered Trinity College in 1668, at the age of sixteen. After some years' study, says Ware, he removed into England, where he continued to the time of his death.—The decision of posterity upon his writings has been very unfavourable; here is the judgment of the court, as pronounced by Sir Walter Scott. His talent for poetry amounted to cold mediocrity; had he been a man of fortune, it would have raised him to the rank of an easy sonnet writer, or a person of wit and honour about town. As he was very poor, it is no disgrace to his muse, that she left him in that indigence, from which far more distinguished poetical merit had been unable to raise those who possessed it. Tate died in the Mint, where he had taken refuge from his creditors, on the 12th of August, 1715. He had long been in extreme want, having owed almost his sole subsistence to the patronage or charity of the Earl of Dorset. His poetry is multifarious; but consists chiefly of pieces upon occasional

subjects, written to supply the immediate wants of the author. The Psalms, of which he executed a translation, in conjunction with Dr. Brady, are still used in the Church of England, although, in the opinion of many persons, they are inferior to the old version.* If we were disposed to move for a new trial *in re* Tate, there are two circumstances which we would wish to put prominently forward. One is the fact of Dryden having selected our unfortunate client, as the fittest person to continue “Absalom and Achitophel,” one of the most successful of his own poems; and the second part of which, was eventually published in 1682, as the sole production of Tate, although there can be no doubt that he received considerable assistance from Dryden on this work. And the other, the equally

* Dr. Nicholas Brady, born 1659, died 1726, was also an Irishman. He was a descendant of Hugh Brady, the first Protestant Bishop of Meath, and was born at Bandon, in the county of Cork, about the year 1659. At twelve years of age, he was sent to Westminster school, from whence he was elected a king’s scholar of Christ Church, Oxford. After holding a prebend and living in Ireland, he went over to England in 1690, and was elected minister of St. Catherine’s Free Church, and lecturer of St. Michael’s: after which he was preferred to the rectory of Clapham, and the living of Richmond, in Surry. He had been chaplain to King William and Queen Mary, and also to Queen Anne, and was at the time of his death, which happened on the 20th of May, 1726, chaplain to the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline. In addition to the Psalms, he also translated the *Æneid* of Virgil, and published one play called *The Innocent Impostors*, 4to. 1692.*

* Biographia Dramatica.

remarkable fact of Tate being appointed poet laureat to William the Third, upon the death of Shadwell, in 1692. A man could not be destitute of considerable talents, who would be thus selected as his associate in an important work by one of the greatest of poets, and who was considered worthy of wearing the laurel

Which Jonson and divinest Spenser wore.

In preference to selecting anything from the second part of Absalom and Achitophel, which may reasonably be supposed to have received the corrections of Dryden, we give a poem which is entirely his own.

TO THE CONCEALED AUTHOR OF ABSALOM AND
ACHITOPHEL.

Hail, heaven-born muse! hail, every sacred page!
The glory of our isle and of our age.
Th' inspiring sun to Albion draws more nigh,
The north at length teems with a rank, to vie
With Homer's flame and Virgil's majesty.
While Pindus' lofty heights our poet sought,
(His ravish'd mind with vast ideas fraught,)
Our language fail'd beneath his rising thought.
This checks not his attempt: for Maro's mines
He drains of all their gold, t' adorn his lines:
Through each of which the Mantuan genius shines.
The rock obey'd the powerful Hebrew guide,
Her flinty breast dissolv'd into a tide:
Thus on our stubborn language he prevails,
And makes the Helicon in which he sails;
The dialect, as well as sense, invents,
And with his poem, a new speech presents.

Hail then, thou matchless bard, thou great unknown,
That give your country fame, yet shun your own !
In vain ; for every where your praise you find,
And, not to meet it, you must shun mankind.
Your loyal theme each royal reader draws,
And even the factious give your verse applause,
Whose lightning strikes to ground their idol cause :
The cause for whose dear sake they drank a flood
Of civil gore, nor spared the royal blood ;
The cause whose growth to crush, our prelates wrote
In vain, almost in vain our heroes fought ;
Yet by one stab of your keen satire dies ;
Before your sacred lines their shatter'd dagon lies.
Oh ! if unworthy we appear to know
The fire, to whom this lovely birth we owe ;
Deny'd our ready homage to express,
And can at best but thankful be by guess ;
This hope remains : may David's God-like mind,
(For him 'twas wrote) the unknown author find ;
And, having found, shower equal favours down,
On wit so vast, as could oblige a crown.

In addition to the poems already mentioned, Tate was the author of nine plays. His alteration of Shakespeare's King Lear still keeps possession of the stage.

THOMAS SOUTHERN.

BORN 1660—DIED 1746.

THOMAS SOUTHERN, one of the greatest English-writing dramatists, and the first writer who in the British empire denounced the traffic in slaves and the cruelties of the West-Indian bondage was born in Dublin in 1660. He received his education in Trinity College. In his eighteenth year he visited London, and entered himself of the Middle Temple. If he had ever any serious intention of devoting himself to the law, he quickly abandoned it, as we find him in 1682 writing his first play, "*The Persian Prince*," which was performed in the same year. The character of *The Loyal Brother*, in this play, was intended to compliment James, duke of York, who, afterwards when James II., did not forget Southern. His next play was "*The Disappointment*," a comedy; which was performed in the year 1684.

At the commencement of the reign of James II., when the Duke of Monmouth made his unfortunate attempt at insurrection, Southern entered the army, and held three commissions in the regiment of Lord Ferrers, viz., those of ensign, lieutenant, and captain. From these appointments, and from the profits arising from his plays, which for the period were unusually great, (he realizing seven hundred pounds from

one piece, as he confessed to Dryden, when “Glorious John” acknowledged that he himself had never received more than one hundred,) he was enabled to spend his latter years in great comfort. Southern was a favourite with his contemporaries, and we get pleasant glimpses of him in the letters and poems of Gray, Pope, and others. Gray writing to Horace Walpole, from Burnham in Buckinghamshire, in 1737, thus describes the venerable dramatist: “We have old Mr. Southern at a gentleman’s house a little way off, who often comes to see us. He is now seventy years old, and has almost wholly lost his memory; but is as agreeable an old man as can be, at least I persuade myself so when I look at him and think of Isabella and Oroonoko.” Five years later he was addressed by Pope in the following pleasant verses:

TO MR. THOMAS SOUTHERN,

On his Birth-day, 1742.

Resign’d to live, prepared to die,
 With not one sin, but poetry,
 This day Tom’s fair account has run
 (Without a blot) to eighty-one.
 Kind Boyle before his poet lays
 A table, with a cloth of bays;
 And Ireland, mother of sweet singers,
 Presents her harp* still to his fingers.
 The feasts, his towering genius marks,
 In yonder wild goose and the larks!
 The mushrooms show his wit was sudden!
 And, for his judgment, lo! a pudden!

* An allusion to the harp woven in the Irish linen, the most fashionable table-cloth at that period.

Roast beef, though old, proclaims him stout,
 And grace, although a bard, devout.
 May Tom, whom Heaven sent down to raise
 The price of prologues and of plays,
 Be every birth-day more a winner,
 Digest his thirty thousandth dinner:
 Walk to his grave without reproach,
 And scorn a rascal and a coach.

Southern died on the 26th of May, 1746, in the 86th year of his age. Posterity seems to have decided that the best and the most pathetic of his plays are "*The Fatal Marriage*," published in 1694, and "*Oroonoko*," in 1696. We shall give a scene from each. It has been objected to Southern that he introduced comic scenes into his tragedies, but, whether this be really a defect is still undecided. The greatest of modern dramatists, and, perhaps, of *all* dramatists, Shakespeare and Calderon, have frequently committed this fault, if it be one, and, perhaps, it is safer to err with them, than to be right with less gifted models. It should be stated, however, that Southern eventually believed himself to have acted erroneously in this respect.

FROM THE TRAGEDY OF THE FATAL MARRIAGE.

ACT IV.—SCENE II.

[Isabella meeting with Biron after her marriage with Villeroy.]

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Madam, the gentleman's below.

Isabella. I had forgot, pray let me speak with him.

(*Exit Nurse.*)

This ring was the first present of my love
 To Biron, my first husband : I must blush
 To think I have a second—Biron died
 (Still to my loss,) at Candy : there's my hope.
 Oh! do I live to hope that he died there?
 It must be so : he's dead, and this ring left
 By his last breath to some known faithful friend,
 To bring me back again

(Biron introduced—Nurse retires.)

That's all I have to trust to—
 My fears were woman's—I have viewed him all :
 And let me, let me say it to myself,
 I live again, and rise but from his tomb.

Biron. Have you forgot me quite?

Isabella. Forgot you.

Biron. Then, farewell my disguise, and my misfor-
 tunes,
 My Isabella.

(He goes to her, she shrieks, and falls in a swoon.)

Isa. Ha!

Bir. Oh! come again!

Thy Biron summons thee to life and love :
 Once I had charms to wake thee :
 Thy once-loved, ever-loving husband calls—
 Thy Biron speaks to thee.

Isa. My husband! Biron!

Bir. Excess of love and joy, for my return,
 Has overpowered her; I was to blame
 To take thy sex's softness unprepared :
 But, sinking thus, thus dying in my arms,
 This ecstasy had made my welcome more
 Than words could say : words may be counterfeit,
 False-coined, and current only from the tongue,
 Without the mind : but passion's in the soul,
 And always speaks the heart.

Isa. Where have I been? why do you keep him from
 me?

I know his voice : my life upon the wing,
 Here's the soft lure that brings me back again.

'Tis he himself, my Biron, the dear man !
 My true-loved husband ! do I hold you fast,
 Never to part again ? can I believe it ?
 Nothing but you could work so great a change :
 There's more than life itself in dying here ;
 If I must fall, death's welcome in these arms.

Bir. Live ever in these arms !

Isa. But, pardon me,
 Excuse the wild disorder of my soul :
 The joy, the strange surprising joy of seeing you,
 Of seeing you again, distracted me——

Bir. Thou everlasting goodness !

Isa. Answer me :
 What hand of providence has brought you back
 To your own home again ? O, satisfy
 The impatience of my heart ! I long to know
 The story of your sufferings. You would think
 Your pleasures sufferings, so long removed
 From Isabella's love. But, tell me all,
 For every thought confounds me.

Bir. My best life ! at leisure, all.

Isa. We thought you dead : killed at the siege of
 Candy.

Bir. There I fell among the dead :
 But hopes of life reviving from my wounds,
 I was preserved but to be made a slave :
 I often writ to my hard father, but never had
 An answer ; I writ to thee too.

Isa. What a world of woe
 Had been prevented, but in hearing from you !

Bir. Alas ! thou couldst not help me !

Isa. You do not know how much I could have done :
 At least, I'm sure, I could have suffered all :
 I would have sold myself to slavery,
 Without redemption : given up my child,
 The dearest part of me, to basest wants——

Bir. My little boy !

Isa. My life, but to have heard
 You were alive—which now, too late, I find. [*Aside.*]

Bir. No more, my love, complaining of the past,
 We lose the present joy. 'Tis over price
 Of all my pains, that thus we meet again——
 I have a thousand things to say to thee.

Isa. Would I were past the hearing. [*Aside.*]

Bir. How does my child, my boy, my father too?
I hear he's living still.

Isa. Well both, both well:
And may he prove a father to your hopes,
Though we have found him none!

Bir. Come, no more tears.

Isa. Seven long years of sorrow for your loss,
Have mourned with me——

Bir. And all my days behind
Shall be employed in a kind recompense
For thy afflictions. Can't I see my boy?

Isa. He's gone to bed: I'll have him brought to you.

Bir. To-morrow I shall see him: I want rest
Myself: after this weary pilgrimage.

Isa. Alas! what shall I get for you?

Bir. Nothing but rest, my love! To-night I would
not

Be known, if possible, to your family:
I see my nurse is with you: her welcome
Would be tedious at this time:
To-morrow will do better.

Isa. I'll dispose of her, and order every thing
As you would have it. [*Exit.*]

Bir. Grant me but life, good heaven, and give the
means

To make this wondrous goodness some amends,
And let me then forget her, if I can!
O! she deserves of me much more than I
Can lose for her, though I again could venture
A father, and his fortune, for her love!
You wretched fathers, blind as fortune all!
Not to perceive that such a woman's worth
Weighs down the portions you provide your sons:
What is your trash, what all your heaps of gold,
Compared to this, my heart-felt happiness?

[*Bursts into tears.*]

What has she, in my absence, undergone?
I must not think of that: it drives me back
Upon myself, the fatal cause of all.

FROM OROONOKO.

[Imoinda and Oroonoko, meet unexpectedly after a long absence.]

Oroo. My soul steals from my body through my eyes;
All that is left of life I'll gaze away,
And die upon the pleasure.

Lieut. This is strange!

Oroo. If you but mock me with her image here,
If she be not Imoinda. [*She looks upon him and falls
into a swoon; he runs to her.*]

Ha! she faints!

Nay, then, it must be she—it is Imoinda!
My heart confesses her, and leaps for joy,
To welcome her to her own empire here. [*Kisses her.*]
Imoinda! oh, thy Oroonoko calls.

Imo. (*Recovering*) My Oroonoko! oh! I can't believe
What any man can say. But if I am
To be deceived, there's something in that name,
That voice, that face— [*Stares at him.*]
Oh! if I know myself, I cannot be mistaken.
[*Embraces him.*]

Oroo. Never here;
You cannot be mistaken; I am yours,
Your Oroonoko, all that you would have;
Your tender, loving husband.

Imo. All, indeed,
That I would have; my husband! then I am
Alive, and waking to the joys I feel;
They were so great, I could not think 'em true;
But I believe all that you say to me,
For truth itself, and everlasting love,
Grow in this breast, and pleasure in these arms.

Oroo. Take, take me all; inquire into my heart,
(You know the way to every secret there,)
My heart, the sacred treasury of love,
And if, in absence, I have misemployed
A mite from the rich store; if I have spent
A wish, a sigh, but what I sent to you,

May I be cursed to wish and sigh in vain,
And you not pity me.

Imo. Oh! I believe,
And know you by myself: if these sad eyes
Since last we parted, have beheld the face
Of any comfort, or once wished to see
The light of any other heaven but you,
May I be struck this moment blind, and lose
Your blessed sight, never to find you more.

Oroo. Imoinda! oh, this separation
Has made you dearer, if it can be so,
Than you were ever to me. You appear
Like a kind star to my benighted steps,
To guide me on my way to happiness:
I cannot miss it now. Governor, friend,
You think me mad; but let me bless you all,
Who any ways have been the instrument
Of finding her again. Imoinda's found!
And everything that I would have in her.

[*Embraces her.*]

Bland. Sir, we congratulate your happiness; I do
most heartily.

Lieut. And all of us; but how it comes to pass—

Oroo. That would require
More precious time than I can spare you now;
I have a thousand things to ask of her,
And she as many more to know of me.
But you have made me happier, I confess,
Acknowledge it, much happier than I
Have power of words to tell you; captain, you,
Even you, who most have wronged me, I forgive.
I wo' not say you have betrayed me now:
I'll think you but the minister of fate,
To bring me to my loved Imoinda here.

Imo. How shall I receive you? how be worthy
Of such endearments, all this tenderness?
These are the transports of prosperity,
When fortune smiles upon us.

Oroo. Let the fools
Who follow fortune live upon her smiles:
All our prosperity is placed in love:
We have enough of that to make us happy.

This little spot of earth you stand upon
 Is more to me than the extended plains
 Of my great father's kingdom. Here I reign
 In full delights, in joys to power unknown,
 Your love my empire, and your heart my throne.

(*Exeunt.*)

In addition to "*Isabella*" and "*Oroonoko*," Southern wrote the following plays:—"Sir Anthony Love," 1691. "*The Wives' Excuse*," 1692. "*The Maid's Last Prayer*," 1693. "*The Fate of Capua*," 1700. "*The Spartan Dame*," 1719. "*Money the Mistress*," 1726. Our last extract shall be from the first-mentioned comedy.

SONG IN SIR ANTHONY LOVE, OR, THE RAMBLING
 LADY.

Pursuing beauty, men descry
 The distant shore, and long to prove
 Still richer in variety
 The treasures of the land of love.

We women, like weak Indians, stand
 Inviting from our golden coast
 The wand'ring rovers to our land:
 But she who trades with them is lost.

With humble vows they first begin,
 Stealing unseen into the heart:
 But, by possession, settled in,
 They quickly play another part.

For beads and baubles we resign,
 In ignorance, our shining store:
 Discover nature's richest mine,
 And yet the tyrants will have more.

Be wise, be wise, and do not try
 How he can court, or you be won:
 For love is but discovery:
 When that is made, the pleasure's done.

RICHARD HEAD.

1663.

RICHARD HEAD was the son of a clergyman, who lost his life in "the Rebellion" of 1641. He was educated for a short time, says Harris,* in the University of Oxford; but could not prosecute his studies for want of a support, and was taken away and bound apprentice to a London bookseller. He afterwards set up for himself, in partnership with Francis Rickman. He was a man extremely addicted to his pleasures; yet of excellent natural parts, had they been improved by virtue, or fixed by solidity; but he had a strange rambling head and neglected his trade. He returned to his native country and stayed some time in Dublin, where he wrote a play, which was acted privately with applause. Going back to London, he followed his trade again, and wrote several trivial things for a livelihood. At length, having passed through many wants and afflictions, he was cast away at sea in his passage to the Isle of Wight. The name of his play is "*Hic et ubique; or, the Humours of Dublin,*" a comedy: London, 1663, 4to.

* Ware's Writers, vol. ii. p. 189.

SWIFT.

BORN NOVEMBER 13, 1667—DIED OCTOBER 19, 1745.

THE name of Jonathan Swift is unquestionably the greatest in our literature, whether we regard the celebrity of the man, the originality of his writings, or their influence on society and the governing power not only in this kingdom but in England.

He was to us, however, something even still higher. He was the first great Anglo-Irish writer who felt that he was an Irishman, and that his injured and despised country was worthy even of the affectation of patriotism. The flame which he was the first to kindle has warmed many a noble heart since. The doctrines which he preached, as one in the wilderness, have now become the creed of millions; but if on the roll of our patriots the names of Lucas, of Flood, and of Grattan, of Charlemont and Leinster, of Tone and Fitzgerald, of Drennan and Davis, and the great living embodiment of the principles of Swift—O'Connell—stand emblazoned, we may thank for all these the illustrious, mysterious, half-understood Dean of St. Patrick's!

We should love in our inmost hearts this strong, weak, mirthful, melancholy, light-hearted, gloomy, affectionate, selfish, whimsical compound of light and darkness, of heaven and earth, which

for seventy-eight years of penury, dependance, faction-fighting, patriotism, discomfort and insanity, bore the name of Jonathan Swift on this earth! Peace! peace! to his ashes. May his name ever live in the memories of his countrymen!

There are few of the writers we have already mentioned, for whom, as Irishmen, we feel much interest—but Swift is entirely ours. The house in which he was born* is within a few streets of us—the temple in which he worshipped—the places he most frequented—the scenes he most loved, and the grave in which he lies buried, are all about us, and we feel a pride in this handsome, silent, decaying city of ours—for it was the city of Swift!

The life of Swift, says Sir Walter Scott, forms an interesting and instructive narrative to all who love to contemplate those alternations of good and evil which chequer the fate of individuals, distinguished by their talents and their fame. Born under circumstances of the most pressing calamity, educated by the cold and careless charity of relations, denied the usual honours attached to academical study, and spending years

* He was born in the house, No. 7, Hoey's-court, between Werburgh-street and the Castle steps. We recently visited this locality, and were informed by an old woman, a resident in the court, that the numbers have been changed, and that the house in which "the Dean" was born is now known as No. 4. Scott calls it "a small house"—the one pointed out to us is a large one. It is next a timber yard, and is the last house on the right hand side as you enter from Werburgh-street.

in dependance upon the inefficient patronage of Sir William Temple, the earlier portion of his history may be considered as a continued tale of depressed genius and disappointed hopes. Yet, under all these disadvantages, Swift arose to be the counsellor of a British administration; the best defender of their measures, and the intimate friend of all who were noble or renowned, learned or witty, in the classic age of Queen Anne.

Nor were the events of his latter years less strongly contrasted. Involved in the fall of his patrons, he became a discontented and persecuted exile from England and from his friends, yet, almost at once, attained a pitch of popularity which rendered him the idol of Ireland, and the dread of those who ruled that kingdom.

Nor was his domestic fate less extraordinary—loving and beloved by two of the most beautiful and interesting women of the time, he was doomed to form a happy and tranquil union with neither, and saw them sink successively to the grave, under the consciousness that their mortal disease had its source in disappointed hopes and ill-requited affection. His talents, also, the source of his fame and his pride, whose brilliancy had so long dazzled and delighted mankind, became gradually clouded by disease, and perverted by passion, as their possessor approached the goal of life; and, ere he attained it, were levelled far below those of ordinary humanity. From the life of Swift, therefore, may be derived the important lesson, that, as no misfortunes should induce genius to despair, no rank of fame, however elevated, should encourage its possessor to

presumption. And those to whom fate has denied such brilliant qualities, or to whom she has refused the necessary opportunities of displaying them, may be taught, while perusing the history of this illustrious man, how little happiness depends upon the possession of transcendent genius, of political influence, or of popular renown.*

As a poet, says the same distinguished authority, Swift's post is pre-eminent in the sort of poetry which he cultivated. He never attempted any species of composition, in which either the sublime or the pathetic were required of him; but in every department of poetry where wit is necessary, he displayed, as the subject chanced to require, either the blasting lightnings of satire, or the lambent and meteor-like coruscations of frolicsome humour. His powers of versification are admirably adapted to his favourite subjects. Rhyme, which is a handcuff to an inferior poet, he who is master of his art wears as a bracelet. Swift was of the latter description; his lines fall as easily into the best grammatical arrangement, and the most simple and forcible expression, as if he had been writing in prose. The numbers and the coincidence of rhymes, always correct and natural, though often unexpected, distinguish the current of his poetical composition, which exhibits otherwise no mark of the difficulty with which these graces are attained. In respect of matter, Swift seldom elevates his tone above a satirical diatribe, a moral lesson, or a poem on manners; but the former are unrivalled

* "Life of Swift," 4, 5.

in severity, and the latter in ease. Sometimes, however, the intensity of his satire gives to his poetry a character of emphatic violence, which borders upon grandeur. This is peculiarly distinguishable in the Rhapsody on Poetry. Yet this grandeur is founded, not on sublimity either of conception or expression, but upon the energy of both ; and indicates rather ardour of temper, than power of imagination—*facit indignatio versus*. The elevation of tone arises from the strong mood of passion, rather than from poetical fancy. When Dryden told Swift he would never be a poet, he only had reference to the Pindaric odes, where power of imagination was necessary for success. In the walk of satire and familiar poetry, wit and knowledge of mankind joined to facility of expression, are the principal requisites for excellence, and in these Swift shines unrivalled. Cadenus and Vanessa may be considered as Swift's *chef d'œuvre* in that class of poems which is not professedly satirical. It is a poem on Manners, and, like one of Marмонтelle's Contes Moraux, traces the progress and involutions of passion existing between two persons in modern society, contrasted strongly in age, manners, and situation. Yet even here the satirical vein of Swift has predominated. We look in vain for depth of feeling or tenderness of sentiment—although had such existed in the poet's mind, the circumstances must have called it forth. The mythological fable, which conveys the compliments paid to Vanessa, is as cold as that addressed to Ardelia or Miss Floyd. It is, in short, a kind of poetry, which neither affects

sublimity nor pathos, but in which the graceful facility of the poet unites with the acute observation of the observer of human nature, to commemorate the singular contest between Cadenus and Vanessa, as an extraordinary chapter in the history of the mind.*

Of the general style of Swift's poems, Dr. Johnson has said, in language not to be amended: "They are often humorous, almost always light, and have the qualities which recommend such compositions—easiness and gaiety. They are, for the most part, what their author intended. The diction is correct, the numbers are smooth, and the rhymes exact. There seldom occurs a hard-laboured expression, or a redundant epithet; all his verses exemplify his own definition of a good style—they consist of 'proper words in proper places.'"

AN EXCELLENT NEW SONG ON A SEDITIOUS PAMPHLET—1720.

(To the tune of "Packington's Pound.")

[This ballad alludes to the Dean's "Proposal for the use of Irish Manufactures," for which Waters the Printer was prosecuted with great violence. In a letter to Pope, dated January 10, 1720, Swift gives an account of the entire proceedings. He says, "I have written in this kingdom, a discourse to persuade the wretched people to wear their own manufactures, instead of those from England: this treatise soon spread very fast, being agreeable to the sentiments of the whole nation, except of those gentlemen who had employments, or were expectants. Upon which, a person in great office here, immediately took the alarm: he sent in haste for the Chief Justice, (Whitshed), and informed him of a seditious, factious, and virulent pamphlet, lately published with a design of setting the two kingdoms at variance: directing at the same time that the Printer should be prosecuted with the utmost rigour of law. The Chief Justice had so quick an

* Life of Swift, pp. 490, 491.

understanding that he resolved, if possible, to outdo his orders. The grand juries of the county and city were practised effectually with, to represent the said pamphlet with all aggravating epithets, for which they had thanks sent them from England, and their presentments published for several weeks in all the newspapers. The printer was seized, and forced to give great bail. After his trial the jury brought him in not guilty, although they had been cuffed with the utmost industry: the Chief Justice sent them back nine times, and kept them eleven hours, until being perfectly tired out, they were forced to leave the matter to the mercy of the judge, by what they call a special verdict. During the trial, the Chief Justice, among other singularities, laid his hand on his breast, and protested solemnly that that author's design was to bring in the Pretender, although there was not a single syllable of party in the whole treatise, and although it was known that the most eminent of those who professed his own principles publicly disallowed his proceedings. But the cause being so very odious and unpopular, the trial of the verdict was deferred from one term to another, until upon the Duke of Grafton, the Lord Lieutenant's arrival, his grace, after mature advice, and permission from England, was pleased to grant a *noli prosequi*.

"This is the more remarkable, because it is said that the man is no ill-decider in common cases of property, where party is out of the question: but when that intervenes, with ambition at heels to push it forward, it must needs confound any man of little spirit, and low birth, who has no other endowment than that sort of knowledge, which, however possessed in the highest degree, can possibly give no one good quality to the mind."]

Brocades and damasks, and tabbies and gauzes
 Are by Robert Ballantine lately brought over,
 With forty things more: now hear what the law says,
 "Whoe'er will not wear them is not the king's lover."
 Though a printer and Dean
 Seditiously mean
 Our true Irish hearts from Old England to wean,
 We'll buy English silks for our wives and our daughters,
 In spite of his Deanship and journeyman Waters.

In England the dead in woollen are clad,
 The Dean and his printer then let us cry "fie on;"
 To be clothed like a carcass would make a Teague mad,
 Since a living dog better is than a dead lion.
 Our wives they grow sullen
 At wearing of woollen,
 And all we poor shopkeepers must our horns pull in;
 Then we'll buy English silks for our wives and our
 daughters,
 In spite of his Deanship and journeyman Waters.

Whoever our trading with England would hinder,
 To inflame both the nations does plainly conspire,
 Because, Irish linen will soon turn to tinder,
 And wool it is greasy, and quickly takes fire.
 Therefore, I assure ye,
 Our noble grand jury,
 When they saw the Dean's book they were in a great
 fury ;
 They would buy English silks for their wives and
 their daughters,
 In spite of his Deanship and journeyman Waters.

That wicked rogue Waters, who always is sinning
 And before *Coram Nobis* so oft has been called,
 Henceforward, shall print neither pamphlets nor linen,
 And, if swearing can do 't, shall be swingingly mauled ;
 And as for the Dean,
 You know whom I mean,
 If the printer will 'peach him he'll scarce come off clean,
 Then we'll buy English silks for our wives and our
 daughters,
 In spite of his Deanship and journeyman Waters.

THE IRISH CRY.

A BALLAD ON WOOD'S HALFPENCE.

1723.

[One of the most remarkable controversies in which Swift was engaged, and in which he indirectly aroused the national spirit of this kingdom, was on the subject of Wood's Halfpence. In the year 1723, owing to a deficiency of copper-coinage in Ireland, the king granted to one William Wood, ("brazier, tinker, hardwareman, coiner, founder, and esquire," as he is called by Swift) the patent-right of coining halfpence and farthings to the extent of £108,000, to be current in this kingdom. Abstractedly, says Scott, there could be no objection to this mode of supplying the want of copper, providing the coinage was of proper weight and quality. But the patent had been obtained in a surreptitious manner, through the influence of the Duchess of Kendal, the mistress of George the First, to whom Wood had promised a share of the profits. It was passed without consulting either the Lord Lieutenant or

Privy Council of Ireland: and in devolving upon an obscure individual the right of exercising one of the highest privileges of the crown, the dignity of the kingdom was disgracefully compromised. The Irish Parliament felt the insult, and caught the alarm. While the struggle was impending, the voice of Swift was heard in the celebrated Drapier's Letters. Strong in argument, and brilliant in humour, but unequalled in the address with which those arguments are selected, and that humour applied.* It is quite clear that the surrender of Wood's patent was a very inferior consideration with Swift, and that he used this grievance, merely as a screen, under which he could more securely and more successfully combat for the independence of his country. In the Drapier's fourth letter he almost completely laid aside the mask, abandoned the petty cause of quarrel, stated the great issue to be tried between the two kingdoms, and proclaimed those indestructible doctrines of liberty and truth, which are still ringing in the nation's ear, and making its heart throb. After alluding to several grievances which then pressed and still press upon this country, such as the almost exclusive employment of natives of England in places of trust and emolument in Ireland, he then turns to his countrymen, and addresses them in the following remarkable passage: "The remedy is wholly in your own hands, and, therefore, I have digressed a little, in order to refresh and continue that spirit so seasonably raised among you, that by the laws of GOD, of NATURE, of NATIONS, and of your COUNTRY, you ARE, and OUGHT to be as FREE a people as your brethren in England."

It is impossible in this place to give a detailed account of all the proceedings that followed the publication of these memorable letters. The enthusiasm of the city and of the country—the resolutions of the parliament and the corporation—the proclamation of the government and their offer of £300 reward for the discovery of the Drapier—the arrest of Harding the printer and his being thrown into prison—the ignoring of the bills by the grand jury, notwithstanding the atrociously indecorous and unconstitutional violence of Chief Justice Whitshed, (who seemed to be ambitious of gathering new laurels,) the almost deification of the Dean—the manœuvring of British ministers and courtly Lords Lieutenant, until the efforts of the Drapier were crowned with complete success—the patent being surrendered, and the first step towards the independence of the country most gloriously achieved. In addition to the Drapier's Letters, Swift wrote a number of songs and humorous squibs, which, like all his short political poems, were printed on a broad sheet, anonymously, and circulated by means of hawkers, through the town. One of the most successful of these was the following:—]

Ye people of Ireland, both country and city,
Come listen with patience, and hear out my ditty;
At this time I'll choose to be wiser than witty,
Which nobody can deny.

The halfpence are coming, the nation's undoing,
There's an end of your ploughing, and baking, and
brewing;

In short you must all go to wreck and to ruin,
Which nobody can deny.

Both high men and low men, and thick men and tall
men,

And rich men and poor men, and free men and thrall
men,

Will suffer; and this man, and that man, and all men.
Which nobody can deny.

The soldier is ruin'd, poor man! by his pay;
His fivepence will prove but a farthing a day,
For meat, or for drink; or he must run away,
Which nobody can deny.

When he pulls out his twopence, the tapster says not,
That ten times as much he must pay for his shot;
And thus the poor soldier must soon go to pot,
Which nobody can deny.

If he goes to the baker, the baker will huff,
And twentypence have for a twopenny loaf,
Then dog, rogue, and rascal, and so kick and cuff,
Which nobody can deny.

Again to the market, whenever he goes,
The butcher and soldier must be mortal foes,
One cuts off an ear, and the other a nose.
Which nobody can deny.

The butcher is stout, and he values no swagger,
A cleaver's a match any time for a dagger,
And a blue sleeve may give such a cuff as may stagger,
Which nobody can deny.

The beggars themselves may be broke in a thrice,
When thus their poor farthings are sunk in their price;
When nothing is left they must live on their lice,
Which nobody can deny.

The squire who has got him twelve thousand a year,
 O Lord! what a mountain his rents would appear!
 Should he take them, he would not have house-room I
 fear,

Which nobody can deny.

Though at present he lives in a very large house,
 There would then not be room in it left for a mouse;
 But the squire is too wise, he will not take a souse,
 Which nobody can deny.

The farmer, who comes with his rent in this cash,
 For taking these counters and being so rash,
 Will be kick'd out of doors, both himself and his trash,
 Which nobody can deny.

For in all the leases that ever we hold,
 We must pay our rent in good silver and gold,
 And not in brass tokens of such a base mould,
 Which nobody can deny.

The wisest of lawyers all swear, they will warrant
 No money but silver and gold can be current;
 And since they will swear it, we all may be sure on't.
 Which nobody can deny.

And I think after all, it would be very strange,
 To give current money for base in exchange,
 Like a fine lady swopping her moles for the mange,
 Which nobody can deny.

But read the king's patent and then you will find,
 That no man need take them but who has a mind,
 For which we must say that his majesty's kind,
 Which nobody can deny.

Now God bless the Drapier who open'd our eyes!
 I'm sure, by his book, that the writer is wise;
 He shows us the cheat, from the end to the rise,
 Which nobody can deny.

Nay, rather, he shows it a very bad case,
 That this fellow, Wood, of a very bad race,
 Should of all the fine gentry of Ireland take place,
 Which nobody can deny.

That he and his halfpence should come to weigh down
 Our subjects so loyal and true to the crown;
 But I hope after all, that they will be his own.
 Which nobody can deny.

This book, I do tell you, is writ for your goods,
 And a very good book, 'tis against Mr. Woods,
 If you stand true together, he's left in the suds,
 Which nobody can deny.

Ye shopmen, and tradesmen, and farmers, go read it,
 For I think in my soul, at this time that you need it;
 Or, egad, if you don't, there's an end of your credit,
 Which nobody can deny.

[From "Verses on the sudden drying up of St. Patrick's Well, near
 Trinity College, Dublin, 1726."—*Patrick speaks*:—]

O! had I been apostle to the Swiss,
 Or hardy Scot, or any land but this;
 Combined in arms, they had their foes defied,
 And kept their liberty, or bravely died;
 Thou still with tyrants, in succession, curst,
 The last invaders trampling on the first:
 Nor fondly hope for some reverse of fate—
 Virtue herself would now return too late.
 Not half thy course of misery is run—
 Thy greatest evils yet are scarce begun.
 Soon shall thy sons (the time is just at hand)
 Be all made captives in their native land;
 When for the use of no Hibernian born
 Shall rise one blade of grass, one ear of corn;

When shells and leather shall for money pass,
 Nor thy oppressing lords afford thee brass,*
 But all turn leasers to that mongrel breed,†
 Who from thee spring, yet on thy vitals feed;
 Who to yon ravenous isle thy treasures bear,
 And waste in luxury thy harvest there;
 For pride and ignorance a proverb grown—
 The jest of wits, and to the court unknown.
 I scorn thy spurious and degenerate line,
 And from this hour my patronage resign.

[From "A Rhapsody on Poetry"—1733.]

All human race would fain be wits,
 And millions miss for one that hits.
 Young's universal passion, pride,
 Was never known to spread so wide
 Say, Britain, could you ever boast
 Three poets in an age at most?
 Our chilling climate hardly bears
 A sprig of bays in fifty years;
 While every fool his claim alleges,
 As if it grew in common hedges.
 What reason can there be assigned
 For this perverseness in the mind?
 Brutes find out where their talents lie—
 A bear will not attempt to fly;
 A founder'd horse will oft debate
 Before he tries a five-barr'd gate;
 A dog by instinct turns aside,
 Who sees the ditch too deep and wide.
 But man we find the only creature
 Who, led by Folly, combats Nature;
 Who, when she loudly cries, Forbear,
 With obstinacy fixes there;

* Wood's ruinous project against the people of Ireland was supported by Sir Robert Walpole in 1724.—Dub. ed.

† The absentees, who spent the income of their Irish estates, places, and pensions in England.—Dub. ed.

And, where his genius least inclines,
Absurdly bends his whole designs.

Not empire to the rising sun,
By valour, conduct, fortune won ;
Not highest wisdom in debates,
For framing laws to govern states ;
Not skill in sciences profound,
So large to grasp the circle round ;
Such heavenly influence require,
As how to strike the Muse's lyre.

Not beggar's brat * * *
Not bastard of a pedlar Scot ;
Not boy brought up to cleaning shoes,
The spawn of Bridewell, or the stews ;
Not infants dropp'd, the spurious pledges
Of gypsies littering under hedges ;
Are so disqualified by fate
To rise in church, or law, or state,
As he whom Phoebus in his ire
Has blasted with poetic fire.

What hope of custom in the fair,
While not a soul demands your ware ?
Where you have nothing to produce,
For private life, or public use ?
Court, city, country, want you not ;
You cannot bribe, betray, or plot ;
For poets law makes no provision ;
The wealthy have you in derision ;
Of state affairs you cannot smatter—
Are awkward when you try to flatter ;
Your portion, taking Britain round,
Was just one annual hundred pound ;
Now not so much as in remainder,
Since Cibber brought in an attainder ;
For ever fix'd by right divine
(A monarch's right) on Grub-street line.

Poor starvling bard, how small thy gains !
How unproportioned to thy pains !
And here a simile comes pat in :
Though chickens take a month to fatten,
The guests in less than half an hour
Will more than half a score devour—

So, after toiling twenty days,
 To earn a stock of pence and praise,
 Thy labours, grown the critic's prey,
 Are swallow'd o'er a dish of tea ;
 Gone to be never heard of more—
 Gone where the chickens went before.
 Now shall a new attempter learn
 Of different spirits to discern,
 And how distinguish which is which,
 The poet's vein, or scribbler's itch ?
 Then hear an old-experienced sinner,
 Instructing thus a young beginner.

Consult yourself, and if you find
 A powerful impulse urge your mind,
 Impartial judge within your breast
 What subject you can manage best ;
 Whether your genius most inclines
 To satire, praise, or humorous lines,
 To elegies in mournful tone,
 Or prologue sent from hand unknown.
 Then, rising with Aurora's light,
 The Muse invok'd, sit down to write ;
 Blot out, correct, insert, refine,
 Enlarge, diminish, interline ;
 Be mindful, when invention fails,
 To scratch your head, and bite your nails.

A CHARACTER, PANEGYRIC, AND DESCRIPTION OF THE LEGION CLUB.

1736.

[This exceedingly severe description of the Irish Parliament in 1736, was the last poem of any importance, that the Dean ever composed. While engaged in retouching it, one of his fits of giddiness and deafness returned with such intense violence, that he never recovered from the consequences. The occasion of the satire was as follows:—In the year 1733, a petition was presented to the House of Commons by Dr. Swift, Dr. Archbold Stewart, John Grattan, Daniel Jackson, &c., in behalf of the Protestant clergy of Ireland, to be heard by counsel, on a clause in the heads of a bill to encourage the linen manufacture, &c. In the following year, 1734, an almost general re-

sistance was made to the payment of the tithe of pasturage, called the tithe of agistment: at which period a most violent spirit prevailed, not among the peasantry, but the Protestant landlords, to attack the income of their church. Unfortunately, however, for the clergy at that time, the persons principally, if not solely affected by this species of tithe, were the best able to bear it, namely, the great graziers and Protestant proprietors of land, who as they possessed considerable influence, directly or indirectly, in the House of Commons, brought the question before themselves, as we may say, in that interested tribunal, on two different occasions; and by raising false alarms (one of which was that the Protestant interest would be impaired by it) eventually succeeded in determining the clergy from making, and the courts of law from entertaining, any demands for the tithe of pasturage, though the act of Henry the Eighth for enforcing it was as clear and plain as that of corn and hay: and till the Union in 1800, no legal legislative act was passed for its abolition. It was the unjustifiable conduct of the landlords, which called forth Swift's indignation against the aiders and abettors of it, in the following poem.

There are many lines in this satire, which may be turned, by those who wish to use them, against those persons who at the present day seek a restoration of the Irish Parliament. It is scarcely necessary to say, that it is not the parliament of 1736 or of any other year that is sought to be restored—but a Legislative Assembly with powers adequate to the wants of the country—elected on the basis of an enlarged and enlarging franchise, and conducted in the spirit of a free and improved constitution. For such a parliament Swift would have been the foremost to struggle.]

As I stroll the city oft I
 See a building large and lofty,
 Not a bow-shot from the College;
 Half the globe from sense and knowledge:
 By the prudent architect,
 Plac'd against the church direct,
 Making good my grandam's jest,
 "Near the church"—you know the rest.
 Tell us what that pile contains?
 Many a head that holds no brains.
 These demoniacs let me dub
 With the name of Legion Club.
 Such assemblies, you might swear,
 Meet when butchers bait a bear:
 Such a noise and such haranguing,
 When a brother thief is hanging:
 Such a rout and such a rabble
 Run to hear jack-pudding gabble:
 Such a crowd their ordure throws
 On a far less villain's nose.

Could I from the building's top
 Hear the rattling thunder drop,
 While the devil upon the roof
 (If the devil be thunder proof,)
 Should with poker fiery red
 Crack the stones, and melt the lead :
 Drive them down on every skull,
 When the den of thieves is full :
 Quite destroy the harpies' nest :
 How might then our isle be blest !
 For divines allow, that God
 Sometimes makes the devil his rod :
 And the Gospel will inform us
 He can punish sins enormous.
 Yet, should Swift endow the schools,
 For his lunatics and fools,
 With a rood or two of land,
 I allow the pile may stand.
 You, perhaps, will ask me : Why so ?
 But it is with this proviso :
 Since the house is like to last,
 Let the royal grant be pass'd,
 That the club have right to dwell
 Each within his proper cell,
 With a passage left to creep in,
 And a hole above for peeping.
 Let them, when they once get in,
 Sell the nation for a pin :
 While they sit a picking straws,
 Let them rave at making laws,
 Let them form a grand committee,
 How to plague and starve the city :
 Let them stare, and storm, and frown,
 When they see a clergy gown ;
 Let them, ere they crack a louse,
 Call for th' orders of the house ;
 Let them, with their gosling quills,
 Scribble senseless heads of bills :
 We may, while they strain their throats,
 [As waste paper use] their votes—
 Let Sir Tom,* that rampant ass,

* Sir Thomas Prendergast.

Stuff his guts with flax and grass ;
 But before the priest he fleeces,
 Tear the Bible all to pieces.
 At the parsons, Tom, halloo, boy,
 Worthy offspring of a shoeboy ;
 Footman, traitor, vile seducer,
 Perjur'd rebel, brib'd accuser,
 Lay thy paltry privilege aside ;
 Sprung from Papists and a regicide,
 Fall a working like a mole,
 Raise the dirt about your hole.

Come, assist me ! Muse obedient !
 Let us try some new expedient ;
 Shift the scene for half an hour,
 Time and place are in thy power ;
 Thither, gentle Muse, conduct me,
 I shall ask, and you instruct me.

See, the Muse unbars the gate ;
 Hark, the monkeys, how they prate :
 All ye gods who rule the soul !
 Styx, through Hell, whose waters roll !
 Let me be allowed to tell
 What I heard in yonder Hell.
 Near the door an entrance gapes,
 Crowded round with antic shapes ;
 Poverty, and grief, and care,
 Causeless joy, and true despair,
 Discord, periwigged with snakes,
 See the dreadful strides she takes !*

By this odious crew beset,
 I began to rage and fret,
 And resolved to break their pates,
 Ere we entered at the gates
 Had not Clio, in the nick,
 Whispered me, "Lay down your stick."
 What, said I, is this the mad-house ?
 These, she answer'd, are but shadows,
 Phantoms, bodiless and vain,
 Empty visions of the brain.

* These and some of the following lines are in imitation of the celebrated description in the sixth book of Virgil's *Æneid*. It is unnecessary in this place to give the corresponding Latin lines.

In the porch Briareus stands,
Shows a bribe in all his hands;
Briareus, the secretary,
But we mortals call him Carey.*
When the rogues their country fleece,
They may hope for pence a piece.

Clio who had been so wise
To put on a fool's disguise,
To bespeak some approbation,
And be thought a near relation,
When she saw three hundred brutes,†
All involved in wild disputes,
Roaring till their lungs were spent,
PRIVILEGE OF PARLIAMENT,
Now a new misfortune feels,
Dreading to be laid by th' heels;
Never durst a Muse before
Enter that infernal door.

Clio, stifled with the smell,
Into spleen and vapours fell,
By the stygean streams that flew
From the dire infectious crew;
Not the stench of Lake Avernus
Could have more offended her nose;
Had she flown but o'er the top,
She had felt her pinions drop,
And by exhalations dire,
Though a goddess, must expire;
In a fright she crept away,
Bravely I resolved to stay.
When I saw the keeper frown,
Tipping him with half a crown,
Now, said I, we are alone,
Name your heroes one by one.
Who is that hell-featur'd brawler?
Is it Satan? No; 'tis Waller.‡

*The Right Honourable Walter Carey. He was secretary to the Duke of Dorset, when Lord Lieutenant. The Duke of Dorset came to Ireland in 1731: in 1737 he was succeeded by the Duke of Devonshire. In Boulter's Letters there is one addressed to him from that primate.

† This may atone for the celebrated epithet "six hundred scoundrels," used in modern times "in another place."

‡ John Waller Esq. member for the borough of Longaile. He was

In what figure can a bard dress
 Jack, the grandson of Sir Hardress?
 Honest keeper, drive him further,
 In his looks are hell and murder;
 See the scowling visage drop,
 Just as when he murder'd Throp.
 Keeper, show me where to fix
 On the puppy pair of Dicks;
 By their lantern jaws and leathern,
 You might swear they both are brethren.
 Dick Fitzbaker, Dick the player,†
 Old acquaintance, are you there?
 Tie them, keeper, in a tether,
 Let them starve and stink together;
 Both are apt to be unruly,
 Lash them daily, lash them duly;
 Though 'tis hopeless to reclaim them,
 Scorpion rods, perhaps, may tame them.
 Keeper, yon old dotard smoke,
 Sweetly snoring in his cloak,
 Who is he? 'Tis humdrum Wynne,‡
 Half encompassed by his kin.
 There observe the tribe of Bingham,§
 For he never fails to bring 'em,
 While he sleeps the whole debate,
 They submissive round him wait;
 Yet would gladly see the hunks
 In his grave, and search his trunks.

grandson to Sir Hardress Waller, one of the regicide judges, and who concurred with them in passing sentence on Charles I. This Sir Hardress married the daughter and co-heir of John Dowdal, of Lime-rick, by which alliance he became so connected with the country, that his family made it their residence.

* Rev. Roger Throp, whose death was said to have been occasioned by the persecution which he suffered from Waller—the cause being the refusal of Mr. Throp to compound, for a compensation totally inadequate, some of the rights of his living which affected Waller's estate.

† Richard Tighe, and Richard Bettesworth, Esquires; Bettesworth is termed the *player*, from his pompous enunciation. The epithet Fitzbaker, alludes to Tighe's descent from a contractor who supplied Cromwell's army with bread. He is elsewhere called Pistorides.

‡ Right Hon. Owen Wynne, county of Sligo; Owen Wynne, Esq. borough of Sligo; John Wynne, Esq. borough of Castlebar.

§ Sir John Bingham, Bart. county of Mayo. His brother Henry Bingham, Esq., sat in parliament for some time for Castlebar.

See they gently twitch his coat,
 Just to yawn and give his vote,
 Always firm in this vocation,
 For the court against the nation.

Those are Allens Jack and Bob,*
 First in every wicked job,
 Son and brother to a queer
 Brain-sick brute they call a peer.
 We must give them better quarter,
 For their ancestor trod mortar,
 And at Howth, to boast his fame,
 On a chimney cut his name.
 There sit Clements, Dilks, and Harrison,†
 How they swagger from their garrison!
 Such a triplet could you tell
 Where to find on this side hell?
 Harrison and Dilks and Clements,
 Keeper, see they have their payments,
 Every mischief's in their hearts;
 If they fail, 'tis want of parts.

Bless us, Morgan,‡ art thou there man!
 Bless mine eyes! art thou the chairman!

* John Allen, represented the borough of Carysfort; Robert Allen, the county of Wicklow. The former was son, and the latter brother to Joshua, the second Viscount Allen, hated and satirised by Swift under the name of Traulus. The ancestor of the Allens was an architect in the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign; and was employed as such by many of the nobility, particularly by Lord Howth. He settled in Ireland, and was afterwards consulted by Lord Strafford in some of his architectural plans.

† There were then two Clements in parliament, brothers, Nathaniel and Henry. Michael O'Brien Dilks represented the borough of Castle-martyr. He was barrack master general; William Harrison represented the borough of Bannow.

‡ Doctor Marcus Antony Morgan, sometimes mentioned in a friendly manner in Swift's correspondence about this period, represented the borough of Athy. He seems to have been bred to the church, yet was chairman to that committee to whom was referred the petition of the farmers, graziers, &c., against tithe-agistment, &c. On this petition the house reported, and agreed that it deserved the strongest

Chairman to your damn'd committee!
 Yet I look on thee with pity,
 Dreadful sight! what! learned Morgan
 Metamorphos'd to a gorgon!
 For thy horrid looks, I own,
 Half convert me to a stone.
 Hast thou been so long at school,
 Now to turn a factious tool?
 Alma Mater was thy mother,
 Every young divine thy brother;
 Thou, ungrateful to thy teachers,
 Who are all grown reverend preachers!
 Morgan, would it not surprise one,
 Turn thy nourishment to poison!
 When you walk among your books,
 They reproach you with their looks;
 Bind them fast, or from their shelves
 They will come and right themselves:
 Homer, Plutarch, Virgil, Flaccus,
 All in arms, prepare to back us:
 Soon repent, or put to slaughter
 Every Greek and Roman author.
 Will you, in your factious phrase,
 Send the clergy all to graze:
 And to make your project pass,
 Leave them not a blade of grass?
 How I want thee, humorous Hogarth!*
 Thou I hear, a pleasant rogue art.
 Were but you and I acquainted,
 Every monster should be painted:
 You should try your graving tools
 On this odious group of fools:

support. At the same time, a motion was made and carried. that commencing suits on the above subject must impair the protestant interest.

* See Hogarth's Works, 4to. vol. 1. p. 93.

Draw the beasts as I describe them :
 Form their features while I gibe them :
 Draw them like, for I assure you,
 You will need no *car'atura* ;
 Draw them so, that we may trace
 All the soul in every face.

Keeper, I must now retire,
 You have done what I desire :
 But I feel my spirits spent
 With the noise, the sight, the scent.
 " Pray be patient, you shall find
 Half the best are still behind !
 You have hardly seen a score :
 I can show two hundred more."
 Keeper I have seen enough.
 Taking then a pinch of snuff,
 I concluded, looking round them,
 " May their god, the devil confound them !"*

* Whilst Swift was writing these satires on the Irish parliament, he was seized with one of those fits, the effect of which was so dreadful, that he left the poem unfinished, and after that period, very rarely attempted a composition either in verse or prose, that required a course of thinking, or, perhaps, more than one or two sittings to finish. One of these was " The Beast's Confession." From this time his memory was perceived gradually to decline, and his melancholy increased by the strength of his imagination brooding over the unhappy scene of misery which he foresaw was his lot, when he must become, as he said, a perfect slobberer. He was often heard to offer up his prayers to Almighty God, " to take him away from this evil to come." The prospect of this calamity, which he was daily lamenting, contributed very much, as his passions were violent, to pervert his understanding, to which many other particulars seem also to have concurred.

REV. THOMAS SHERIDAN, D.D.

BORN 1684—DIED 1738.

THOUGH not precisely in the order of time, we think it better that a few of the favourite companions of Swift should follow immediately after their illustrious friend. The principal of these, in many respects, was Dr. Sheridan, who was the founder of a family of genius, in which talent has been hereditary for many generations.

Dr. Sheridan, says Scott, highly respectable for wit, learning, and an uncommon talent for the education of youth, and no less distinguished by his habits of abstraction and absence, and a simplicity of character which ill suited with his worldly interest, had been Swift's friend of every mood and of all hours, since the Dean's final retirement into Ireland. A happy art of meeting and answering the raillery of his friend, and of writing with facility verses upon domestic jests, or occasional incidents, amused Swift's lighter moments, while Sheridan's sound and extensive erudition enlightened those which were more serious. It was in his society that Swift renewed his acquaintance with classical learning, and penned the works which engaged his retirement. In the invitation sent to the Dean, Sheridan was always included; nor was Swift to be seen in perfect good humour, unless when he made part

of the company. Indeed he understood the Dean's temper so well, and knew so happily to arrest, by some sudden stroke of humour, those fits of violent irritability to which Swift's mind was liable as his outward frame was to those of vertigo, that he was termed, among their common friends, the David who alone could play the evil spirit out of Saul. Swift was not insensible of the value of such a friend, nor unwilling to repay his services by every means in his power. His high rank and character enabled him to promote the flourishing state of Sheridan's school, which was then the first in the kingdom.*

His intimacy with Swift, in the year 1725, procured for him a living in the South of Ireland, worth about £150 a year, which he went to take possession of, and which, by an act of inadvertence, destroyed all his future expectations of rising in the church. For, being at Cork on the 1st of August, the anniversary of King George's birth-day, he preached a sermon which had for its text, *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof*. On this being known, he was struck out of the list of chaplains to the Lord Lieutenant, and forbidden the Castle.† This ill-starred, good-natured, improvident man, (as he is called by Lord Corke,) returned to Dublin, unhinged from all favour at court. But he still remained a punster, a quibbler, a fiddler, and a wit. Not a day passed without a rebus, an anagram, or a madrigal. His pen and his fiddlestick were in continual motion, and yet, to little or no purpose; and he died Septem-

* Life of Swift, pp. 308, 309.

† Biog. Dramatica.

ber 10, 1738. The house in Capel-street, in which Dr. Sheridan kept his school, and where he was so often visited by Swift, is still standing; it is at present known, as No. 27, and is nearly opposite the Scot's church. We recently visited it with much interest, as, along with its connection with Swift and Sheridan, it has other claims to notice. When James the Second was in Dublin, it was used by him as his mint, and much of the celebrated brass money proceeded from this old house; it was afterwards, as we have stated, inhabited by Sheridan, and later still, by Henry Brooke, the author of *Gustavus Vasa*, *The Fool of Quality*, &c., who died there.*

BALLAD ON BALLYSPELLIN, 1728.

[Ballyspellin was a famous spa in the county of Kilkenny, where the Doctor had been to drink the waters.

In the fortieth volume of pamphlets in the library of the Royal Dublin Society, there is "*An Essay on the Waters and Air of Ballispellan, with their various properties and uses, joined with rules of conduct for the Rich and Poor in drinking the Waters and the proper exercises necessary there. By John Burgess, M. D. Dublin: Printed by W. Wilmot, for George Ewing, at the Angel and Bible in Dame-street, 1725.*"

This is a curiosity in its way, from which we cannot forbear making an extract:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen of happier and better fortune than the inferior set of humankind, ought particularly in the course of their sickly lives, but more religiously when enter'd into a method of mineral waters, strictly to abstain from all high season'd meats and fretting inflaming wines and spirits, because they must allow that the too great indulgence in them are often the causes of such indispositions,

* These facts I have had from my respectable, intelligent old friend, Mr. La Vallee of Arran-Quay, who possesses an amazing fund of anecdote connected with the localities of Dublin, and with English and Irish literature generally.

by heaping *Ossa* upon *Pelion*, or one mountain upon another, of lavishing multiplicity and almost indissoluble deserts, that however fashionable are most perniciously made covers for better aliments: and throwing in layers of such varieties of juices, that were their stomachs and bowels composed of flint instead of tender membranes, when loads were not thrown or shook off by rustic labour and morning exercises—what certain indigestions? What burdens of viscid unactive extracts, or slimy juices will lodge on all the nervous tunics, or finest linings of the first passages? and how little of such a coagulated medley can possibly enter the narrow winding *Lacteals* or milkly strainers destined to receive the purer uncorrupted fluids, that Nature first designed for nutrition, and all the preserving offices of life?"—*P. 29.*]

All you that would refine your blood,
As pure as fam'd Llewellyn,
By waters clear, come every year
To drink at Ballyspellin.

If lady's cheek be green as leek
When she comes from her dwelling,
The kindling rose within it glows
When she's at Ballyspellin.

The sooty brown, who comes from town,
Grows here as fair as Helen;
Then back she goes to kill the beaux,
By drink of Ballyspellin.

Our ladies are as fresh and fair
As Rose, or bright Dunkelling:
And Mars might make a fair mistake
Were he at Ballyspellin.

We men submit as they think fit,
And here is no rebelling:
The reason's plain; the ladies reign,
They're queens at Ballyspellin.

By matchless charms, unconquer'd arms,
They have the way of quelling
Such desperate foes, as dare oppose
Their power at Ballyspellin.

Cold water turns to fire, and burns,
I know, because I fell in
A stream, which came from one bright dame
Who drank at Ballyspellin.

Fine beaux advance, equipt for dance,
To bring their Anne or Nell in,
With so much grace, I'm sure no place
Can vie with Ballyspellin.

No politics, no subtle tricks,
No man his country selling :
We eat, we drink ; we never think
Of these at Ballyspellin.

The troubled mind, the puffed with wind,
Do all come here pell-mell in ;
And they are sure to work their cure,
By drinking Ballyspellin.

Though dropsy fills you to the gills,
From chin to toe though swelling,
Pour in, pour out, you cannot doubt
A cure at Ballyspellin.

Death throws no darts through all these parts,
No sextons here are knelling :
Come judge and try, you'll never die,
But live at Ballyspellin.

Except you feel darts tipt with steel,
Which here are every belle in :
When from their eyes sweet ruin flies,
We die at Ballyspellin.

Within this ground we all sleep sound,
No noisy dogs a-yelling :
Except you wake, for Celia's sake,
All night at Ballyspellin.

There all you see, both he and she,
 No lady keeps her cell in :
 But all partake the mirth we make,
 Who drink at Ballyspellin.

My rhymes are gone : I think I've none,
 Unless I should bring hell in :
 But, since I'm here to heaven so near,
 I can't at Ballyspellin !

A LETTER TO THE DEAN WHEN IN ENGLAND.

1726.

You will excuse me, I suppose,
 For sending rhyme instead of prose.
 Because hot weather makes me lazy,
 To write in metre is more easy.
 While you are trudging London town,
 I'm strolling Dublin up and down ;
 While you converse with lords and dukes,
 I have their betters here, my books :
 Fix'd in an elbow-chair at ease,
 I choose companions as I please.
 I'd rather have one single shelf
 Than all my friends, except yourself ;
 For after all that can be said,
 Our best acquaintance are the dead.
 While you're in raptures with Faustina,*
 I'm charmed at home with your Sheelina ;
 While you are starving there in state,
 I'm cramming here with butcher's meat.
 You say, when with those lords you dine,
 They treat you with the best of wine—
 Burgundy, Cyprus, and Tokay ;
 Why so can we as well as they.
 No reason, then, my dear good Dean,
 But you should travel home again.

* Signora Faustina, a famous Italian singer.

What though you mayn't in Ireland hope
 To find such folk as Gay and Pope,
 If you with rhymers here would share
 But half the wit that you can spare,
 I'd lay twelve eggs, that in twelve days
 You'd make a dozen Popes and Gays.

Our weather's good, our sky is clear;
 We've every joy, if you were here;
 So lofty and so bright a sky
 Was never seen by Ireland's eye!
 I think it fit to let you know
 This week I shall to Quilca go,
 To see, alas! my wither'd trees!
 To see what all the country sees,
 My stunted quicks, my famish'd beeves,
 My servants such a pack of thieves;
 My shatter'd firs, my blasted oaks,
 My house in common to all folks,
 No cabbage for a single snail,
 My turnips, carrots, parsnips fail;
 My no green peas, my few green sprouts;
 My mother always in the pouts;
 My horses rid, or gone astray,
 My fish all stol'n or run away;
 My mutton lean, my pullets old,
 My poultry starv'd, the corn all sold.
 A man come now from Quilca says
 "*They**'ve stol'n the locks from all your keys."
 But what must fret and vex me more,
 He says, "*They* stole the keys before.
 "*They*'ve stol'n the knives from all the forks;
 And half the cows from half the sturks."
 Nay more, the fellow swears and vows,
 "*They*'ve stol'n the sturks from half the cows."
 With many more accounts of woe;
 Yet, though the devil be there, I'll go:
 'Twixt you and me, the reason's clear,
 Because I've more vexation here.

* *They* is the grand thief of the county of Cavan: for whatever is stolen, if you enquire of a servant about it, the answer is, "*They* have stolen it."—*Dub. ed.*

REV. PATRICK DELANY, D.D.

BORN 1685—DIED 1768.

PATRICK DELANY, another of the intimate and favourite friends of Swift, was born in 1685. His father lived as a servant in the family of Sir John Rennell, a judge in one of our courts, so that it was altogether owing to his own exertions and ability, that young Delany was enabled to rise from the humble station in life in which he was born. He entered Trinity College as a sizer, and after the usual time, took the customary degrees, and was elected first a junior, and afterwards a senior Fellow of the College. The income arising from these appointments and from the number of his pupils, left him in easy circumstances, his receipts amounting on the average to about a thousand pounds a year.

During his residence in the University he formed the acquaintance of Swift, and became in a short time one of his greatest favourites. His general ability, his social talents, and his skill and facility in writing those light and humorous verses in which Swift himself so much indulged and excelled, made him a welcome associate with Sheridan and the other intimates of the Dean, and a constant visitor at the Deanery.

In the year 1727, Dr. Delany was presented by the University of Dublin, to a small northern

living of about a hundred pounds a year, and about the same time, Lord Carteret, the then Lord Lieutenant promoted him to the chancellorship of Christ Church, which was of equal value. Afterwards in 1730 his Excellency gave him a prebend, the produce of which did not exceed either of the other preferments.* Upon receiving the two former of these promotions, the doctor, who had grown weary of an academic life, ventured into the world, and that in a very scanty condition, "having" says Swift, "squandered away all his annual income in a manner, which, although perhaps proper enough for a clergyman without a family, will not be for the advantage of his character either on the exchange or at a banker's shop."

From this period until his death he devoted himself a good deal to the duties of the pulpit and to literary pursuits, and became eminent as a preacher and a theological writer. In the latter capacity he published, in 1732, the first volume of his work, entitled "Revelation examined with Candour." In the same year he married, in England, his first wife Mrs. Margaret Tenison, an Irish widow lady of large fortune. On his return to Dublin he manifested his regard for the University in which he was educated and of which he had been long a distinguished member, by giving twenty pounds a year to be distributed among the students. In 1739, he published a curious pamphlet entitled "Reflections upon Polygamy, and the encouragement given to that

* Biog. Britannica.

practice in the Scriptures of the Old Testament." His next work of importance was "An historical account of the Life and Reign of David, King of Israel, interspersed with various Conjectures, Digressions and Disquisitions." The first of this work appeared in 1740, the second in 1742, and the third in the same year. This work is said to be written with spirit, and to contain some valuable and curious criticisms, but with too great a partiality for his hero, whose defects he is unnecessarily anxious to conceal.

In 1743, Dr. Delany married his second wife Mrs. Pendarves, ("a very ingenious and excellent woman,") his first wife having died in 1741. And in May 1744 he was appointed to the Deanery of Down, the highest preferment which he ever attained.

In 1754, he published, anonymously, his "Observations upon Lord Orrery's Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift." This book was written with great spirit and truth, and served to remove much of the prejudice which had been excited against the character of Swift by the book of Lord Orrery. Dr. Delany died at Bath, in the month of May 1768, in the 83d year of his age.

As specimens of the light and humorous versification of Delany, the following may be given :

ON GAULSTON HOUSE,

THE SEAT OF GEORGE ROCHFORD, ESQ.

"Tis so old and so ugly, and yet so convenient,
You're sometimes in pleasure, though often in pain in't ;

'Tis so large you may lodge a few friends with ease in't,
 You may turn and stretch at your length if you please
 in't;
 'Tis so little, the family live in a press in't;
 And poor Lady Betty* has scarce room to dress in't;
 'Tis so cold in the winter, you can't bear to lie in't,
 And so hot in the summer, you're ready to fry in't;
 'Tis so little, 'twould scarce bear the weight of a tun,
 Yet so stanch, that it keeps out a great deal of sun;
 'Tis so crazy, the weather with ease beats quite through it,
 And you're forced every year in some part to renew it;
 'Tis so ugly, so useful, so big, and so little,
 'Tis so stanch and so crazy, so strong and so brittle,
 'Tis at one time so hot, and another so cold,
 It is part of the new, and part of the old;
 Too bad for a blessing, too good for a curse,
 I wish, then, dear George, it were better or worse.

THE PHEASANT AND THE LARK,

A FABLE.—1730.

“ Quis iniquæ

“ Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus, ut teneat se ?”—*Juv.*

In ancient times, as bards indite,
 (If clerks have conn'd the records right,)
 A Peacock reign'd, whose glorious sway
 His subjects with delight obey.
 His tail was beauteous to behold,
 Replete with goodly eyes and gold,
 Fair emblem of that monarch's guise,
 Whose train at once is rich and wise;
 And princely ruled he many regions,
 And statesmen wise and valiant legions.
 A pheasant lord,† above the rest,
 With every grace and talent blest,

* Daughter of the Earl of Drogheda, and married to George Rochfort, Esq.

† Lord Carteret, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Was sent to sway, with all his skill,
 The sceptre of a neighbouring hill.*
 No science was to him unknown,
 For all the arts were all his own:
 In all the living-learned read,
 Though more delighted with the dead;
 For birds, if ancient tales say true,
 Had then their Popes and Homers too;
 Could read and write in prose and verse,
 And speak like * * *, and build like Pearce.†
 He knew their voices and their wings,
 Who smoothest soars, who sweetest sings:
 Who toils with ill-fledg'd pens to climb,
 And who attained the true sublime.
 Their merits he could well descry,
 He had so exquisite an eye:
 And when that failed to shew them clear,
 He had as exquisite an ear.
 It chanced as on a day he strayed
 Beneath an academic shade,
 He liked, amidst a thousand throats,
 The wildness of a woodlark's notes,‡
 And searched, and spy'd, and seized his game,
 And took him home, and made him tame;
 Found him, on trial, true and able,
 So cheer'd and fed him at his table.
 Here some shrewd critic finds I'm caught,
 And cries out, "Better fed than taught;"
 Then jests on game and tame, and reads,
 And jests, and so my tale proceeds.
 Long had he studied in the wood,
 Conversing with the wise and good;
 His soul with harmony inspir'd,
 With love of truth and virtue fir'd:
 His brethren's good and Maker's praise
 Were all the study of his lays:
 Were all his study in retreat,
 And now employ'd him with the great.

* Ireland.

† A famous modern architect, who built the Parliament House in Dublin.

‡ Dr. Delany.

His friendship was the sure resort
Of all the wretched at the court,
But chiefly merit in distress,
His greatest blessing was to bless—
This fix'd him in his patron's breast,
But fir'd with envy all the rest:
I mean that noisy craving crew
Who round the court incessant flew,
And prey'd like rooks, by pairs and dozens,
To fill the maws of sons and cousins:
“Unmoved their heart, and chill'd their blood,
To every thought of common good,
Confining every hope and care
To their own low contracted sphere.”
These ran him down with ceaseless cry,
But found it hard to tell you why,
Till his own worth and wit supplied
Sufficient matter to deride:
“'Tis envy's safest, surest rule,
To hide her rage in ridicule:
The vulgar eye she best beguiles,
When all her snares are deck'd with smiles:
Sardonic smiles, by rancour rais'd!
Tormented most when seeming pleas'd!”
Their spite had more than half expired,
Had he not wrote what all admired;
What morsels had their malice wanted,
But that he built, and plann'd, and planted!
How had his sense and learning griev'd them,
But that his charity relieved them!
“At highest worth dull malice reaches,
As slugs pollute the fairest peaches:
Envy defames, as harpies vile
Devour the food they first defile.”
Now ask the fruit of all his favour—
“He was not hitherto a saver.”—
What, then, could make their rage run mad?
Why, what he hop'd, not what he had.
“What tyrant e'er invented ropes,
Or racks, or rods, to punish hopes?
Th' inheritance of Hope and Fame
Is seldom earthly wisdom's aim:

Or, if it were, is not so small,
 But there is room enough for all."
 If he but chance to breathe a song,
 (He seldom sang, and never long,)
 The noisy, rude, malignant crowd,
 Where it was high, pronounced it loud :
 Plain Truth was Pride : and what was sillier,
 Easy and Friendly was Familiar.
 Or if he tun'd his lofty lays,
 With solemn air to virtue's praise,
 Alike abusive and erroneous,
 They call'd it hoarse and inharmonious.
 Yet, so it was, to souls like theirs,
 Tuneless as Abel to the bears !
 A Rook* with harsh malignant caw
 Began, was follow'd by a Daw : †
 (Though some, who would be thought to know,
 Are positive it was a Crow :)
 Jackdaw was seconded by Tit.
 Tomtit ‡ could write, and so he writ ;
 A tribe of tuneless praters follow,
 The Jay, the Magpie, and the Swallow ;
 And twenty more their throats let loose
 Down to the witless waddling Goose.

Some peck'd at him, some flew, some flutter'd,
 Some hiss'd, some scream'd, and others mutter'd :
 The Crow, on carrion wont to feast,
 The Carrion Crow condemned his taste :
 The Rook, in earnest too, not joking,
 Swore all his singing was but croaking.

Some thought they meant to show their wit,
 Might think so still—"but that they writ :"
 Could it be spite or envy ? "No,

* Dr. T——r.

† Right Hon. Richard Tighe.
‡ Dr. Sheridan.

Who did no ill could have no foe."
So wise simplicity esteem'd;
Quite otherwise true wisdom deem'd:
This question rightly understood,
"What more provokes than doing good?
A soul ennobled and refined
Reproaches every baser mind:
As strains exalted and melodious
Make every meaner music odious."

At length the Nightingale* was heard,
For voice and wisdom long rever'd,
Esteem'd of all the wise and good,
The Guardian Genius of the wood:
He long in discontent retir'd,
Yet not obscur'd, but more admir'd:
His brethren's servile souls disdaining,
He liv'd indignant and complaining:
They now afresh provoke his choler,
(It seems the Lark had been his scholar,
A favourite scholar always near him,
And oft had wak'd whole nights to hear him.)
Enrag'd he canvasses the matter,
Exposes all their senseless chatter,
Shows him and them in such a light,
As more inflames, yet quells their spite,
They hear his voice, and frighted fly,
For rage had raised it very high;
Sham'd by the wisdom of his notes,
They hide their heads, and hush their throats.

* Dean Swift.

REV. WILLIAM DUNKIN, D. D.

1735.

ANOTHER of the planets that revolved round the splendid sun of Swift was William Dunkin. He was educated at Trinity College, and received from that university an annuity of eighty, and afterwards (owing to the interference of Swift,) of a hundred pounds. This assistance was given him in consequence of a female relative having bequeathed an estate in land, for ever, to the college, and fellows of Trinity College, upon condition that they should take care of his education, and afterwards assist to advance him in the world. He was ordained by Dr. Bolton, the Protestant Archbishop of Cashel, in April, 1735, the recommendations of Swift getting the better of the prejudices which the archbishop confessed he entertained to the "unhappy genius" of Dunkin.*

In 1746 he was placed by the Earl of Chesterfield at the head of the richly endowed school of Enniskillen, which had been founded by Charles the First.

In the controversy between Sergeant Bettesworth and the Dean, Dunkin took a warm interest. In a satire printed in 1735, says Scott, ridiculing the dissenters for pretending to the title of

* Dr. Bolton's Letter to Swift, April 7, 1735.

“Brother-Protestants and Fellow-Christians,” the Dean, among other ludicrous illustrations of their presumption, introduced this simile :

Thus at the bar the booby B———,
Though half a crown o’erpays his sweat’s worth,
Who knows in law, nor text, nor margent,
Calls Singleton his brother-sergeant.

The blank in the termination of the first couplet indicated Mr. Bettesworth, a member of parliament and sergeant at law,* remarkable for his florid elocution in the House, and at the bar, who had been very active in promoting those proceedings which Swift regarded as prejudicial to the clergy. Upon reading the lines he was wrought up to such a height of indignation, that, drawing out a knife, he swore he would with that very instrument cut out the Dean’s ears. After this denunciation, he went in the height of his fury to the deanery, and from thence to Mr. Worrall’s, where Swift was on a visit.—The family were at dinner, and the stranger being shown into another apartment, the Dean was called out to him. The Sergeant advanced to

* The rhyme is said to have been suggested by a casual circumstance. A porter brought a burden to the Dean’s house while he was busy with the poem, and labouring to find a rhyme for this uncommon name, the more anxiously, that Bettesworth exulted in the idea of its being impossible. The fellow’s demand being considered as exorbitant, he wiped his forehead, humorously saying, “Oh! your Reverence, my sweat’s worth half a crown.” The Dean instantly caught at the words, “Ay, that it is, there’s half a crown for you.”—This anecdote is given on the authority of Mr. Theophilus Swift.

him with great haughtiness, and said, "Doctor Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, I am Sergeant Bet-tes-worth:" this being his affected mode of pronouncing his name. "Of what regiment?" answered Swift. After a very angry parley, Bettsworth began to raise his voice, and gave such indications of violence, that Mr. Worrall and the servants, rushing in, compelled him to withdraw. The tradition in the Dean's family, bears, that Bettsworth actually drew his knife; but the Dean's own narrative, transmitted to the Lord Lieutenant, does not countenance that last excess, only affirming, that by Bettsworth's own report, he had a sharp knife in his pocket, and a footman attending in the hall to open the door to one or two ruffians, who waited his summons in the street.* Owing probably to

* Life of Swift, p. 419.—Various accounts of this interview have been given, but that of the Dean to the Duke of Dorset, written immediately after it took place, ought to be preferred. The following additional circumstances are mentioned by Sheridan: "O, Mr. Dean," said Bettsworth, in answer to the retort mentioned in the text, "we know your powers of raillery; you know, well enough, that I am one of his Majesty's sergeants at law." "What then, sir?" "Why then, sir, I am come to demand of you, whether you are the author of this poem, (producing it,) and these villanous lines on me?" at the same time reading them aloud, with great vehemence of emphasis, and much gesticulation. "Sir," said Swift, "it was a piece of advice given me in my early days by Lord Somers, never to own or disown any writing laid to my charge; because, if I did this in some cases, whatever I did not disown afterward would infallibly be imputed to me as mine. Now, sir, I take this to have been a very wise maxim, and as such have followed it ever since; and I believe it

the literary assistance rendered by Dunkin, in the controversies which arose out of these transactions, he became a favourite with the Dean, and we find the latter using every opportunity of promoting his interests. In a letter to Mr. Alderman Barber of London, dated January 17, 1737, speaking of a living which was expected soon to be vacant, he says: "I insist upon it, that if Doctor Squire dies, you will bestow it to Mr. Dunkin, a clergyman, upon whose character I have lately taken him into my favour. He is a gentleman of much wit, and the best English as well as Latin poet in this kingdom. He has £100 a year from our university, to be continued till he is provided for. He is a pious, regular man, highly esteemed; but our bishops, like yours, have little regard for such accomplishments, while they have any dunces of nephews or cousins.—I therefore charge you to use your influence and authority, that Mr. Dunkin may have this church living upon the decease of Dr. Squire; because you know that my talent was a little (or rather too much) turned to poetry—but

will hardly be in the power of all your rhetoric, as great a master as you are of it, to make me swerve from that rule." Many other things passed, as related in the above-mentioned letter. But when Bettesworth was going away, he said: "Well, since you will give me no satisfaction in this affair, let me tell you, your gown is your protection; under the sanction of which, like one of your own yahoos, who had climbed up to the top of a high tree, you sit secure and squirt your filth on all mankind." Swift had candour enough not to conceal this last circumstance, at the same time saying, "that the fellow showed more wit in this than he thought him possessed of."

he is wiser than I, because he writes no satires, whereby, you know well enough, how many great people I disoblged, and suffered by angering great people in favour."—Dr. Dunkin published his poetical pieces in two volumes. We select, as a specimen, his translation of Swift's Latin verses on Carbery Rocks.

CARBERY ROCKS—IN THE COUNTY OF CORK.

(Translated by Dr. Dunkin.)

[Carbery was the largest barony in Ireland, but is now divided into two parts, viz., East and West Carbery; it anciently extended from Kinsale to the Bay of Bantry. Some years ago, says Smith, (Hist. of Cork, vol. 1. p. 265.) the Rev. Dean Swift spent a summer at a clergyman's house in the parish of Miros: he often diverted himself in making little voyages on the coast, from Glandore harbour towards Baltimore: and these excursions occasioned his Latin poem, called "Carberiae Rupes," which he wrote in June, anno 1723. Having made the same voyage more than once, I had the pleasure of observing, that the Dean's descriptions were as just as his numbers were beautiful.]

Lo! from the top of yonder cliff, that shrouds
Its airy head amid the azure clouds,
Hangs a huge fragment: destitute of props,
Prone on the wave the rocky ruin drops:
With hoarse rebuff the swelling seas rebound,
From shore to shore the rocks return the sound:
The dreadful murmur Heaven's high convex cleaves,
And Neptune shrinks beneath his subject waves;
For, long the whirling winds and beating tides
Had scooped a vault into its nether sides.
Now yields the base, the summits nod, now urge
Their headlong course, and lash the sounding surge.
Not louder noise could shake the guilty world,
When Jove heaped mountains upon mountains hurl'd:
Retorting Pelion from his dread abode,
To crush Earth's rebel sons beneath the load.

Oft, too, with hideous yawn the cavern wide
Presents an orifice on either side,
A dismal orifice, from sea to sea

Extended pervious to the god of day :
 Uncouthly joined, the rocks stupendous form
 An arch, the ruin of a former storm :
 High on the cliff their nests the woodquests make,
 And sea calves stable in the oozy lake.

But when bleak winter with his sullen train
 Awakes the winds to vex the watery plain :
 When o'er the craggy steep without control,
 Big with the blast, the raging billows roll ;
 Not towns beleagur'd, not the flaming brand,
 Darted from heaven by Jove's avenging hand,
 Oft as on impious men his wrath he pours,
 Humbles their pride, and blasts their gilded towers,
 Equal the tumult of this wild uproar ;
 Waves rush o'er waves, rebellows shore to shore,
 The neighbouring race, though wont to brave the shocks
 Of angry seas, and run along the rocks,
 Now pale with terror, while the ocean foams,
 Fly far and wide, nor trust their native homes.

The goats, while pendent from the mountain top,
 The withered herb improvident they crop,
 Wash'd down the precipice with sudden sweep,
 Leave their sweet lives beneath th' unfathom'd deep.

The frightened fisher, with desponding eyes,
 Though safe, yet trembling in the harbour lies,
 Nor hoping to behold the skies serene,
 Wearies with vows the monarch of the main.

Dunkin, notwithstanding his known friendship with Swift, indeed, seemingly in consequence of it, appears to have provoked an unreasonable quantity of abuse from his brother bards. In the second folio volume of scarce tracts in the library of the Royal Dublin Society, are several severe

* This alludes to a stupendous arch, through which a boat may row. It is in the parish of Miros, and not far from the place where the Dean usually embarked. Near the west head of Castlehaven are deep caves, which are low at the entrance, but grow higher within. The swell of the sea rises a boat up to the roof almost, when one is in: which, also, by turns, closes up the entrance, and makes them very dark and gloomy.—*Smith's Cork*, vol. 2. p. 265.

satires upon the chevalier of St. Patrick. His name is not printed in full, but we have no doubt they were levelled at Dunkin. They are all printed on broadsides; one of the most curious of them is called, "The Funeral Procession of the Chevalier de St. Patrick." It is headed with a rude wood engraving representing the procession—the last figure is death, a skeleton with a dart—who is called, "A gentleman who engaged for the whole impression of the chevalier's works, whenever they should happen to be published."

The account of the doctor's supposed death is thus given: "This unfortunate gentleman, whose funeral procession we here behold, departed this life on Saturday the second of this instant (November), 1734, in the thirty-fifth year of his age. He was observed for sometime before to be a little disordered in his head, but it was hoped that a large dose of hellebore, which he got on the morning of that fatal day, would have restored him to his senses, whereas instead of producing the intended effect, as it happened to be given in too great a quantity at one time, it threw him into a raging madness, and in the evening he was found hanging in a pair of garters, which he had a little before celebrated in a ballad. In his pocket was found a strange medley of verse and prose, consisting of *Greek, Latin, Irish, French, and English*, all thrown together into one piece, which seemed to have been wrote by him since he became delirious. If ever this posthumous work appears in public, we hope it will be considered as writ by a man who had not the benefit of lucid intervals."

Another of these curious broadsides is the following very severe satire :—

THE CHEVALIER DE ST. PATRICK ;

OR, THE

IRISH PRETENDER'S CHARACTER.

To thee, O D——n, be these truths addrest, *
 Whose spleen, won't let thyself nor others rest : †
 Jilted by Fame, by Pegasus o'erthrown,
 Abusing all men, and affronting none ;
 Whose vanity no sheepishness can hide :
 Whose principles no mortal can abide :
 By nature peevish, by profession poor,
 By spirit sordid and in life obscure :
 So much a mimic as no friend to spare,
 Awkwardly proud, and silently severe ;
 Whose mispent time upbraids thee into spleen,
 And each sad moment adds to thy chagrin :
 Whose rueful outside speaks the wretch within,
 Whose sense consists of shrugs, whose wit is grin :

* This extraordinary person, some four years since published proposals for a volume of poems, which were accepted by a number of honest gentlemen, then his friends, but as soon as his subscriptions were completed, instead of printing the book, he most gratefully sits down to satirize his subscribers and benefactors. One of those libels was intitled, "A wonderful Apparition," seen perhaps within these two days but happily laid—when it walk'd, came out this epigram:—

To Mr. D——n, on his "Wonderful Apparition."

And is this what you call your two years' boast,
 To turn vile conjuror, and raise a ghost!
Faustus himself might pity thy condition,
 Damn'd for a better, younger Apparition.

† It was customary with our hero, when any rival poem succeeded, to keep his chamber and take physic for it.

Mistaken humour! how must thou descend
 When such like animals to spleen pretend!
 Humour! that's now usurp'd by every knave,
 The vain man's tyrant, and the wise man's slave!
 Beneath thy aspect wondrous wisdom lies,
 And specious folly lurks in thy disguise:
 Cautious conceit thy simp'ring sneers adorn,
 Too mean for satire, and too keen for scorn:
 Ev'n harmless souls sometimes bely thy name,
 And sober fools provoke the sons of fame:
 But chiefly blockheads of the scribbling race,
 Hang out thy sign on their important face.

Among the many monkies laugh'd at here,
 Where coxcombs, pedants, prigs, buffoons appear,
 Stern critics whom their cruelties renown,
 Who smile for money and for hunger frown,
 Say on which side Swiss-like wilt thou engage,
 Thou rising Dennis of a future age?
 Tho' each fat huckster courts thee to her shrine,*
 Tho' ev'ry ale-house in the *Green* be thine,
 Tho' now each sign its great Apollo knows
 From *Moreton's* Mug-house, down to Sandy's *Rose*; †
 While through each gin-shop thy remembrance flies
 Dear to each *cellar* in the *nether* skies!

So suit all tempers that delight in *Bub*,
 A tribe censorious, and a sauntering club!
 Who, like each other's converse out of spite,
 And in the bitterness of heart unite,

* There goes a remarkable story of our genius, whose life, Dulness had a design upon, by so small a machine as an egg, which gave birth to this facetious epigram:—

Curs'd eggs! still foes to poetical folk,
 Whom they spare at the pillory, at the hucksters they choke.

† Two noted ale-houses on the Green.

Men that approve with a malignant smile,
Decently damn, and civilly revile :
Jealous of looks : commending to destroy,
Pain all their end, and ridicule their joy :
Who, stung with envy, chuse to live alone,
Rather than talk of merit—not their own.
Such D——n is, reviling and revil'd,
In mind distracted, and in visage wild :
Bred with the worst : uneasy with the best,
Fed out of pity—treated out of jest.

Dublin : Printed in year 1734.

Dunkin was consoled for this abuse by the author of a poetical epistle, addressed to him, entitled, a “*Libel on the Dublin Dunces,*” printed in 1734.

Let this thy motto serve to raise
An ample monument of praise :
Abus'd by rascals dull and mean,
Esteem'd and honoured by the Dean.

Dunkin survived Swift, and was one of the witnesses to his will.

WILLIAM CONGREVE.

BORN 1670—DIED 1729.

As far as his place of birth is concerned, we must surrender our claims to the name of William Congreve. The production of the register of his admission to Trinity College, has put it beyond doubt that his own statement was true, and that he was not born in this country. He, however, spent his childhood and his boyhood, his school and college days amongst us—times and circumstances, which, above all others, form the character and direct the intellect. And we, therefore, perhaps, may take greater pride in his fame than if he were merely connected with us by birth. His works have been recently collected (in conjunction with those of Wycherly, Vanburgh, and Farquhar,) by one of the most genial and agreeable of living writers, Leigh Hunt, and criticised by Mr. Macauley, the most brilliant and (on literary matters,) the best informed contributor to the “Edinburgh Review.” It would be presumptuous to attempt an improvement on the criticism of those eminent writers, and what follows is an abridgment and combination of the two.

William Congreve was born in 1670,* at

* Mr. Leigh Hunt says 1669, but the old style has misled him.

Bardsey, in the neighbourhood of Leeds. His father, a younger son of a very ancient Staffordshire family, had distinguished himself among the cavaliers in the civil war, was set down after the Restoration for the order of the Royal Oak, and subsequently settled in Ireland, under the patronage of the Earl of Burlington.

Congreve passed his childhood and youth in Ireland. He was sent to school at Kilkenny, (Swift had been educated at the same establishment, and by the same tutor, St. George Ashe, afterwards Protestant Bishop of Clogher and Derry :) and thence went to the university of Dublin. His learning does great honour to his instructors. From his writings it appears, not only that he was well acquainted with Latin literature, but that his knowledge of the Greek poets was such as was not common even in a college.

When he had completed his academical studies, he was sent to London to study the law, and was entered of the Middle Temple. He troubled himself, however, very little about pleading or conveyancing, and gave himself up to literature and society. Two kinds of ambition early took possession of his mind, and often pulled it in opposite directions. He was conscious of great fertility of thought, and power of ingenious combination. His lively conversation, his polished manners, and his highly respectable connexions, had obtained for him ready access to the best company. He longed to be a great writer. He longed to be a man of fashion. Either object was within his reach, but could he become both?

Was there not something vulgar in letters—something inconsistent with the easy apathetic graces of a man of the mode? Was it aristocratical to be confounded with creatures who lived in the cocklofts of Grub-street, to bargain with publishers, to hurry printers' devils, to squabble with managers, to be applauded or hissed by pit, boxes, and galleries? Could he forego the renown of being the first wit of his age? Could he attain that renown without sullyng what he valued quite as much—his character for gentility? The history of his life is the history of a conflict between these two impulses. In his youth the desire of literary fame had the mastery; but, soon the meaner ambition overpowered the higher, and obtained supreme dominion over his mind.

His first work, a novel of no great value, he published under the assumed name of "*Cleophil*." (Of this book Dr. Johnson said it was easier to praise it than to read it, while Mr. Leigh Hunt, who has read it, says it is easier to read it than to praise it.)

His second was the "*Old Bachelor*," acted in 1693, a play, inferior, indeed, to his other comedies, but, in its own line, inferior to them alone. The plot is equally destitute of interest and of probability. The characters are either not distinguishable, or are distinguished only by peculiarities of the most glaring kind. But the dialogue is resplendent with wit and eloquence, which, indeed, are so abundant, that the fools come in for an ample share—and yet preserves a certain colloquial air, a certain indescribable ease of which Wycherly had given no example, and

which Sheridan in vain attempted to imitate. The author, divided between pride and shame—pride at having written a good play, and shame at having done an ungentleman-like thing—pretended that he had merely scribbled a few scenes for his own amusement, and affected to yield unwillingly to the importunities of those who pressed him to try his fortune on the stage. The “*Old Bachelor*” was seen in manuscript by Dryden: one of whose best qualities was a hearty and generous admiration for the talents of others. He declared that he had never seen such a first play, and lent his services to bring it into a form fit for representation. Nothing was wanting to the success of the piece. It was so cast as to bring into play all the comic talent, and to exhibit on the boards, in one view, all the beauty which Drury Lane Theatre, then the only theatre in London, could assemble. The result was a complete triumph, and the author was gratified with rewards more substantial than the applauses of the pit—Montague, then a lord of the treasury, immediately gave him a place, and, in a short time, added the reversion of another place of much greater value, which, however, did not become vacant till many years had elapsed.

In 1694, Congreve brought out the “*Double Dealer*,” a comedy, in which all the powers which had produced the “*Old Bachelor*,” show themselves, matured by time, and improved by exercise. The play was unfavourably received; yet, if the praise of distinguished men could compensate an author for the disapprobation of the multitude, Congreve had no reason to repine. Dry-

den, in one of the most ingenious, magnificent, and pathetic pieces that he ever wrote, extolled the author of the "*Double Dealer*," in terms which now appear extravagantly hyperbolical. Till Congreve came forth—so ran this exquisite flattery—the superiority of the poets who preceded the civil wars was acknowledged.

‘Theirs was the giant race before the flood.’

Since the return of the Royal house, much art and ability had been exerted, but the old masters had been still unrivalled.

Our builders were with want of genius curst,
The second temple was not like the first.

At length a writer had arisen, who just emerging from boyhood, had surpassed the authors of the "*Knight of the Burning Pestle*," and the "*Silent Woman*," and who had only one rival left to contend with.

‘Heaven, that but once was prodigal before,
To Shakspeare gave us much, he could not give him
more.

Some lines, near the end of the poem are singularly graceful and touching, and sank deep into the heart of Congreve.

‘Already am I worn with cares and age,
And just aband’ning the ungrateful stage;
But you, whom every Muse and Grace adorn,
Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
Be kind to my remains; and, oh, defend
Against your judgment your departed friend;
Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
But guard those laurels which descend to you.’

The crowd as usual came over to the opinion

of the men of note ; and the "*Double Dealer*," was before long quite as much admired, though perhaps never so much liked as the "*Old Bachelor*."

In 1695, appeared "*Love for Love*," superior both in wit and in scenic effect to either of the preceding plays. Scarcely any comedy within the memory of the oldest man had been equally successful. The actors were so elated that they gave Congreve a share in their theatre, and he promised in return to furnish them with a play every year, if his health would permit. Two years passed, however, before he produced the "*Mourning Bride*," a play which, paltry as it is when compared, we do not say with *Lear* or *Macbeth*, but with the best dramas of Massinger and Ford, stands very high among the tragedies of the age in which it was written. To find any thing so good we must go twelve years back to "*Venice Preserved*," or six years forward to the "*Fair Penitent*." The noble passage which Johnson, both in writing and in conversation, extolled above any other in the English drama, has suffered greatly in the public estimation, from the extravagance of his praise. Had he contented himself with saying that it was finer than any thing in the tragedies of Dryden, Otway, Lee, Rowe, Southern, Hughes, and Addison—than anything, in short, that had been written for the stage, since the days of Charles the First—he would not have been in the wrong.

The success of the "*Mourning Bride*," was even greater than that of "*Love for Love*." Congreve was now allowed to be the first tragic,

as well as the first comic dramatist of his time; and all this at twenty-seven. We believe that no English writer except Lord Byron, has, at so early an age, stood so high in the estimation of his contemporaries.*

The immorality and licentiousness that characterized the dramatic literature of this period, naturally awoke the horror and alarm of the religious portion of society. This feeling of disgust and terror, soon found a fitting interpreter in the person of the Rev. Jeremy Collier. He was a clergyman of the Church of England, bred at Cambridge. In religious opinions, according to Mr. Macauley, he belonged to that section in the English church, which lies furthest from Geneva and nearest to Rome. His notions touching Episcopal government, holy orders, the efficacy of the sacraments, the authority of the fathers, the guilt of schism, &c., differed little from those which are now held by Dr. Pusey.

In 1698, Collier published his "Short view of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage," a book which threw the whole literary world into commotion, but which is now much less read than it deserves. The effect produced by the "Short View" was immense. The nation was on the side of Collier. But it could not be doubted that in the great host which he had defied, some champion would be found to lift the gauntlet. The general belief was, that Dryden would take the field; and all the wits anticipated a sharp contest between two well-primed com-

* Edinburgh Review, January, 1841.

batants. The great poet had been singled out in the most marked manner. But his conscience smote him; he stood abashed, like the fallen archangel at the rebuke of Zephon.

And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw and pined
His loss.

Dryden was silent, and it would have been wise in Congreve to follow his master's example. His answer was a complete failure. He was angry, obscure and dull. Even the Green Room and Will's Coffee-House were compelled to acknowledge, that in wit the parson had a decided advantage over the poet. Not only was Congreve unable to make any show of a case where he was in the wrong, but he succeeded in putting himself completely in the wrong where he was in the right. Collier's reply was severe and triumphant—one of his repartees we will quote, not as a favourable specimen of his manner, but because it was called forth by Congreve's characteristic affectation. The poet spoke of the "*Old Bachelor*" as a trifle to which he attached no value, and which had become public by a sort of accident. "I wrote it," said he, "to amuse myself in a slow recovery from a fit of sickness." "What his disease was," replied Collier, "I am not to inquire; but it must be a very ill one to be worse than the remedy." The victory remained with Collier. A great and rapid reform in all the departments of English lighter literature was the effect of his labours. A new race of wits and poets arose, who generally treated with reverence

the great ties which bind society together. This controversy probably prevented Congreve from fulfilling the engagements with which he had entered with the actors. It was not till 1700 that he produced the "*Way of the World*," the most deeply meditated, and the most brilliantly written of all his works. It wants, perhaps, the constant movement, the effervescence of animal spirits, which we find in "*Love for Love*." But the hysterical rants of Lady Wishfort, the meeting of Witwoud and his brother, the country knight's courtship and his subsequent revel, and, above all, the chase and surrender of Millamant, are superior to any thing that is to be found in the whole range of English comedy from the civil war downward. It is quite inexplicable to us that this play should have failed on the stage. Yet so it was; and the author, already sore with the wounds which Collier had inflicted, was galled past endurance by this new stroke. He resolved never again to expose himself to the rudeness of a tasteless audience, and took leave of the theatre for ever.

He lived twenty-eight years longer without adding to the high literary reputation which he had attained. He read much while he retained his eye sight, and now and then wrote a short essay, or an idle tale, in verse: but appears never to have planned any considerable work. The miscellaneous pieces which he published in 1710, are of little value, and have long been forgotten. His means were for a long time scanty. The place which he had in possession, barely enabled him to live with comfort. When the

House of Hanover came to the throne, his fortunes began to flourish. The reversion to which he had been nominated twenty years before, fell in. He was made secretary to the island of Jamaica; and his whole income amounted to £1200 a year—a fortune which, for a single man, was in that age, not only easy, but splendid. He continued, however, to practice the frugality which he had learned when he could scarcely spare, as Swift tells us, a shilling to pay the chairman who carried him to Lord Halifax's.* The infirmities of age came early upon him. His habits had been intemperate: he suffered much from gout; and when confined to his chamber, had no longer the solace of literature. Blindness, the most cruel misfortune that can befall the lonely student, made his books useless to him. He was thrown on society for all his amusement; and, in society, his good breeding

* Thus Congreve spent in writing plays,
And one poor office, half his days;
While Montague, who claimed the station
To be Mæcenās of the nation,
For poets open table kept,
But ne'er considered where they slept.
Himself as rich as fifty Jews,
Was easy though they wanted shoes;
And crazy Congreve scarce could spare
A shilling to discharge his chair;
Till prudence taught him to appeal
From Pæan's fire to party zeal;
Not owing to his happy vein
The fortunes of his latter scene:
Took proper principles to thrive;
And so might every dunce alive.

Swift's Lines on Dr. Delany and Lord Carteret.

and vivacity made him always welcome. By the rising men of letters he was considered, not as a rival, but as a classic. There can be no stronger illustration of the estimation in which Congreve was held, than the fact, that Pope's *Iliad*, a work which appeared with more splendid auspices than any other in our language, was dedicated to him. There was not a duke in the kingdom who would not have been proud of such a compliment. Dr. Johnson expresses great admiration for the independence of spirit which Pope showed on this occasion: "He passed over peers and statesmen to inscribe his '*Iliad*' to Congreve, with a magnanimity, of which the praise had been complete, had his friend's virtue been equal to his wit."

The singular affectation which had from the first been characteristic of Congreve, grew stronger and stronger as he advanced in life. At last it became disagreeable to him to hear his own comedies praised. Voltaire, whose soul was burned up by the raging desire for literary renown, was half puzzled, half disgusted by what he saw, during his visit to England, of this extraordinary whim. Congreve disclaimed the character of a poet—declared that his plays were trifles produced in an idle hour, and begged that Voltaire would consider him merely as a gentleman. "If you had been merely a gentleman," said Voltaire, "I should not have come to see you."

In the summer of 1728 Congreve was ordered to try the Bath waters. During his excursion he was overturned in his chariot, and received

some severe internal injury, from which he never recovered. He came back to London in a dangerous state, complained constantly of a pain in his side, and continued to sink till, in the following January, he expired.

The wit of Congreve, says Mr. Macauley, far out-shines that of every comic writer, except Sheridan, who has arisen within the last two centuries.

[Comedy is a "graceful ornament to the civil order; the Corinthian capital of polished society." Like the mirrors in a theatre, it reflects the images of grace, of gaiety, and pleasure double, and completes the perspective of human life. To read a good comedy, is to keep the best company in the world, where the best things are said, and the most amusing happen. The wittiest remarks are always ready on the tongue, and the luckiest occasions are always at hand to give birth to the happiest conceptions. In turning over the pages of the best comedies, we are almost transported to another world, and escape from this dull age, to one that was all life and whim, and mirth and humour.—The curtain rises, and a gayer scene presents itself, as on the canvass of Watteau. We are admitted behind the scenes like spectators at court, on a levee or birth-day; but it is the court, the gala-day of wit and pleasure, of gallantry and Charles II.! What an air breathes from the name! What a rustling of silks and waving of plumes! What a sparkling of diamond ear-rings and shoe-buckles! What bright eyes, (oh, those were Waller's Sacharissa as she passed!) what killing looks and graceful emotions! How the faces of the whole ring are dressed in smiles! how the repartee goes round! how wit and folly, and elegance and awkward imitation of it, set one another off! Thoughtless age, when kings and nobles led purely ornamental lives: when the utmost stretch of a morning study went no farther than the choice of a sword-knot, or the adjustment of a side-curl: when the soul spoke out in all the pleasing eloquence of dress; and beaux and belles, enamoured of themselves in one another's follies, fluttered like gilded butterflies, in giddy mazes, through the walks of St. James's Park!

The four principal writers of this style of comedy, are undoubtedly Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar. The dawn was in Etherege, as its latest close was in Sheridan. It is hard to say which of these four is best, or in what each of them excels, they had so many and such great excellencies.

Congreve is the most distinct from the others, and the most easily defined, both from what he possessed, and from what he wanted. He had by far the most wit and elegance, with less of other things, of humour, character, incident, &c. His style is inimitable, nay, perfect. It is the highest model of comic dialogue. Every sentence is

replete with sense and satire, conveyed in the most polished and pointed terms. Every page presents a shower of brilliant conceits, is a tissue of epigrams in prose, is a new triumph of wit, a new conquest over dulness. The fire of artful raillery is no where else so well kept up. This style, which he was almost the first to introduce, and which he carried to the utmost pitch of classical refinement, reminds one exactly of Collins's description of wit as opposed to humour,

“ Whose jewels in his crisped hair,
Are placed each other's light to share.”

Sheridan will not bear a comparison with him in the regular antithetical construction of his sentences, and in the mechanical artifices of his style, though so much later, and though style in general has been so much studied, and in the mechanical part so much improved since then. It bears every mark of being what he himself, in the dedication of one of his plays, tells us that it was, a spirited copy taken off, and carefully revised from the most select society of his time, exhibiting all the sprightliness, ease, and animation of familiar conversation, with the correctness and delicacy of the most finished composition. His works are a singular treat to those who have cultivated a taste for the niceties of English style: there is a peculiar flavour in the very words, which is to be found in hardly any other writer. To the mere reader his writings would be an irreparable loss: to the stage they are already become a dead letter, with the exception of one of them—“*Love for Love*.” This play is as full of character, incident, and stage effect, as almost any of those of his contemporaries, and fuller of wit than any of his own comedies, except, perhaps, “*The Way of the World*.” It still acts, and is still acted well. The effect of it is prodigious on the well-informed spectator.—HAZLITT.]

[*Scenes from “Love for Love”—a Comedy.*]

SCENE I.—Valentine's lodging.

VALENTINE discovered reading; JEREMY waiting; several books upon the table.

Val. Jeremy!

Jer. Sir?

Val. Here, take away: I'll walk a turn, and digest what I have read.

Jer. [*Aside.*] You'll grow devilish fat upon this paper diet. [*Takes away the books.*]

Val. And d'ye hear, go to breakfast. There's a page doubled down in Epictetus that is a feast for an emperor.

Jer. Was Epictetus a real cook, or did he only write receipts?

Val. Read, read, sirrah! and refine your appetite:

learn to live upon instruction; feast your mind, and mortify your flesh; read, and take your nourishment in at your eyes; shut up your mouth, and chew the cud of understanding; so Epictetus advises.

Jer. O Lord! I have heard much of him, when I waited upon a gentleman at Cambridge. Pray what was that Epictetus?

Val. A very rich man—not worth a groat.

Jer. Humph, and so he has made a very fine feast when there is nothing to be eaten?

Val. Yes.

Jer. Sir, you're a gentleman, and probably understand this fine feeding: but, if you please, I had rather be at board-wages. Does your Epictetus, or your Seneca here, or any of these poor rich rogues, teach you how to pay your debts without money? Will they shut up the mouths of your creditors? Will Plato be bail for you? or Diogenes, because he understands confinement, and lived in a tub, go to prison for you? 'Slife, sir, what do you mean? to mew yourself up here with three or four musty books, in commendation of starving and poverty?

Val. Why, sirrah, I have no money, you know it: and therefore resolve to rail at all that have, and in that I but follow the examples of the wisest and wittiest men in all ages: these poets and philosophers whom you naturally hate, for just such another reason, because they abound in sense, and you are a fool.

Jer. Ay, sir, I am a fool, I know it; and yet, heaven help me, I'm poor enough to be a wit:—but I was always a fool when I told you what your expenses would bring you to: your coaches and your liveries, your treats and your balls: your being in love with a lady that did not care a farthing for you in your prosperity, and keeping company with wits that cared for nothing but your prosperity, and, now, when you are poor, hate you as much as they do one another.

Val. Well, and now I am poor I have an opportunity to be revenged on 'em all: I'll pursue Angelica with more love than ever, and appear more notoriously her admirer in this restraint, than when I openly rivalled the rich fops that made court to her: so shall my poverty be a

mortification to her pride, and, perhaps, make her compassionate the love which has principally reduced me to this lowness of fortune. And for the wits, I'm sure I am in a condition to be even with them.

Jer. Nay, your condition is pretty even with theirs, that's the truth on't.

Val. I'll take some of their trade out of their hands.

Jer. Now, heaven of mercy, continue the tax upon paper! you don't mean to write!

Val. Yes, I do: I'll write a play.

Jer. Hem! sir, if you please to give me a small certificate of three lines—only to certify those whom it may concern, that the bearer hereof, Jeremy Fetch by name, has for the space of seven years, truly and faithfully served Valentine Legend, Esq., and that he is not now turned away for any misdemeanor, but does voluntarily dismiss his master from any future authority over him.

Val. No, sirrah, you shall live with me still.

Jer. Sir, it's impossible: I may die with you, starve with you, or be damned with your works: but to live, even three days, the life of a play, I no more expect it, than to be canonized for a Muse after my decease.

Val. You are witty, you rogue! I shall want your help: I'll have you learn to make couplets, to tag the ends of acts: d'ye hear, get the maids to crambo in an evening, and learn the knack of rhyming: you may arrive at the height of a song sent by an unknown hand, or a chocolate-house lampoon.

Jer. But, sir, is this the way to recover your father's favour? why, Sir Sampson will be irreconcilable. If your younger brother should come from sea, he'd never look upon you again. You're undone, sir, you're ruined, you won't have a friend left in the world if you turn poet. Ah, confound that Will's coffee-house! It has ruined more young men than the Royal Oak lottery: nothing thrives that belongs to it. The man of the house would have been an alderman by this time, with half the trade, if he had set up in the city. For my part, I never sit at the door that I don't get double the stomach that I do at a horse race: the air upon Banstead Down is nothing to it for a whetter. Yet, I never see it,

but the spirit of famine appears to me, sometimes like a decayed porter, worn out with carrying billets-doux and songs: not like other porters for hire, but for the jest's sake: now like a thin chairman, melted down to half his proportion with carrying a poet upon tick, to visit some great fortune, and his fare to be paid him, like the wages of sin, either at the day of marriage, or the day of death.

Val. Very well, sir, can you proceed?

Jer. Sometimes like a bilked bookseller, with a meagre terrified countenance, that looks as if he had written for himself, or were resolved to turn author, and bring the rest of his brethren into the same condition.

SCENE II.

Valentine, Scandal, and Jeremy.

Scan. What, Jeremy holding forth?

Val. The rogue has (with all the wit he could muster up,) been declaiming against wit.

Scan. Ay? why, then, I'm afraid Jeremy has wit: for wherever it is, it's always contriving its own ruin.

Jer. Why, so I have been telling my master, sir; Mr. Scandal, for heaven's sake, sir, try if you can dissuade him from turning poet.

Scan. Poet! he shall turn soldier first, and rather depend upon the outside of his head, than the lining. Why, what the devil! has not your poverty made you enemies enough? Must you needs show your wit to get more?

Jer. Ay, more indeed, for who cares for any body that has more wit than himself?

Scan. Jeremy speaks like an oracle. Don't you see how worthless great men, and dull rich rogues, avoid a witty man of small fortune? Why he looks like a writ of inquiry into their titles and estates; and seems commissioned by heaven to seize the better half.

Val. Therefore I would rail in my writings, and be revenged.

Scan. Rail! at whom? the whole world? Impotent and vain! who would die a martyr to sense in a country

where the religion is folly? you may stand at bay for a while; but when the full cry is against you, you shan't have fair play for your life. If you can't be fairly run down by the hounds, you will be treacherously shot by the huntsmen. No! turn flatterer, quack, lawyer, parson, be chaplain to an atheist, anything but a poet; a modern poet is worse, more servile, timorous and fawning, than any I have named; without you could retrieve the ancient honours of the name, recal the stage of Athens and be allowed the force of open honest Satire.

Val. You are as inveterate against our poets as if your character had been lately exposed upon the stage. Nay, I am not violently bent upon the trade, [*Knocking at the door.*] Jeremy, see who's there, [*Exit Jeremy.*] But tell me what you would have me do? What does the world say of me and my forced confinement?

Scan. The world behaves itself as it uses to do on such occasions; some pity you and condemn your father; others excuse him and blame you.

Re-enter Jeremy.

Val. How now?

Jer. Nothing new, sir; I have despatched some half-a-dozen duns with as much dexterity as a hungry judge does causes at dinner time.

Val. What answer have you given 'em?

Scan. Patience, I suppose? the old receipt.

Jer. No, faith, sir. I have put 'em off so long with patience and forbearance, and other fair words, that I was forced now to tell 'em in plain down-right English—

Val. What?

Jer. That they would be paid.

Val. When?

Jer. To-morrow.

Val. And how the devil do you mean to keep your word?

Jer. Keep it! not at all; it has been so very much stretched, that I reckon it will break of course by to-morrow, and nobody be surprised at the matter. [*Knocking.*] Again! Sir, if you don't like my negotiation will you be pleased to answer these yourself?

Val. See who they are.

SCENES FROM "THE WAY OF THE WORLD."

["The Way of the World" was the author's last and most carefully finished performance. It is an essence almost too fine; and the sense of pleasure evaporates in an aspiration after something that seems too exquisite ever to have been realized. After inhaling the spirit of Congreve's wit, and tasting "love's thrice-reputed nectar" in his works, the head grows giddy in turning from the highest point of rapture to the ordinary business of life; and we can with difficulty recall the truant fancy to those objects which we are fain to take up with here, *for better for worse*. .

Millamant is the perfect model of the accomplished fine lady:—

"Come then, the colours and the ground prepare,
Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air;
Choose a firm cloud, before it falls, and in it
Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of a minute."

She is the ideal heroine of the comedy of high life, who arrives at the height of indifference to everything from the height of satisfaction; to whom pleasure is as familiar as the air she draws; elegance worn as a part of her dress; wit the habitual language which she hears and speaks; love, a matter of course; and who has nothing to hope or fear, her own caprice being the only law to herself, and rule to those about her. She refines on her pleasures to satiety; and is almost stifled in the incense that is offered to her person, her wit, her beauty, and her fortune. Secure of triumph, her conquests give her neither surprise nor concern, and she is good-natured and generous with all her temptations to the contrary.

Congreve has described all this in his character of *Millamant*, but he has done no more; and if he had, he would have done wrong. He has given us the finest idea of an artificial character of this kind; but it is still the reflection of an artificial character. The springs of nature, passion, or imagination, are but feebly touched. The impressions appealed to, and with masterly address, are habitual, external, and conventional advantages. The mere fine lady of comedy, compared with the heroine of romance or poetry, when stripped of her adventitious ornaments and advantages, is too much like the doll stripped of its finery. In thinking of *Millamant*, we think almost as much of her dress as of her person: it is not so with respect to *Rosalind* or *Perdita*. The poet has painted them differently; in colours which "nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on," with health, with innocence, with gaiety, "wild wit, invention ever new:" with pure red and white, like the wilding's blossoms; with warbled wood-notes, like the feathered choirs; with thoughts fluttering on the wings of imagination; and hearts panting, and breathless with eager delight. The interest we feel is in themselves; the admiration they excite is for themselves. They do not depend upon the drapery of circumstances. It is nature that "blazons herself" in them. *Imogen* is the same in a lonely cave as in a court; nay, more, for she then seems something heavenly—a spirit or a vision; and, as it were, shames her destiny, brighter for the foil of circumstances. *Millamant* is nothing but a fine lady; and all her airs and affectation would be blown away with the first breath of misfortune.—

Enviably in drawing-rooms, adorable at her toilet, fashion, like a witch, has thrown its spell around her; but, if that spell were broken, her power of fascination would be gone. For that reason I think the character better adapted for the stage; it is more artificial, more theatrical, more meretricious.—HAZLITT.]

SCENE V.—ACT II.

MIRABELL, MRS. FAINALL, MRS. MILLAMANT, WITWOUND, and MINCING.

Mir. Here she comes, i' faith, full sail, with her fan spread, and her streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders; ha, no, I cry her mercy!

Mrs. Fain. I see but one poor empty sculler; and he tows her woman after him.

Mir. [*To Millamant.*] You seem to be unattended, madam, you used to have the *beau monde* throng after you; and a flock of fine gay perukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like moths about a candle—I had like to have lost my comparison for want of breath.

Mil. O I have denied myself airs to-day, I have walked as fast through the crowd——

Wit. As a favourite just disgraced; and with as few followers.

Mil. Dear Mr. Witwound, truce with your similitudes; for I am as sick of 'em——

Wit. As a physician of good air—I cannot help it, madam, though 'tis against myself.

Mil. Yet, again! Mincing, stand between me and his wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. Mincing, like a screen before a great fire—I confess I do blaze to-day, I am too bright.

Mrs. Fain. But, dear Millamant, why were you so long?

Mil. Long! lord, have I not made violent haste; I have asked every living thing I met for you; I have inquired after you, as after a new fashion.

Wit. Madam, truce with your similitudes. No, you met her husband, and did not ask him for her.

Mil. By your leave, Witwound, that were like inquiring after an old fashion, to ask a husband for his wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit! a hit! a palpable hit! I confess it.

Mrs. Fain. You were dressed before I came abroad.

Mil. Ay, that's true—O but then I had—Mincing, what had I? why was I so long?

Min. O mem, your la'ship stayed to peruse a packet of letters.

Wil. O ay, letters—I had letters—I am persecuted with letters—nobody knows how to write letters, and yet one has 'em, one does not know why. They serve one to pin up one's hair.

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find I must keep copies.

Mil. Only with those in verse. Mr. Witwoud, I never pin up my hair with prose. I think I tried once, Mincing.

Min. O mem, I shall never forget it.

Mil. Ay, Poor Mincing, tift and tift all the morning.

Min. Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll vow, mem, and all to no purpose; but when your la'ship pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as any thing, and is so pure and so crips.

Wit. Indeed, so crips?

Min. You're such a critic, Mr. Witwoud.

Mil. Mirabell, did you take exceptions last night? O ay, and went away. Now I think on't—I'm angry. No; now I think on't I'm pleased—for I believe I gave you some pain.

Mir. Does that please you?

Mil. Infinitely; I love to give pain.

Mir. You would affect a cruelty which is not in your nature. Your true vanity is in the power of pleasing.

Mil. Oh, I ask your pardon for that—one's cruelty is in one's power—and when one parts with one's cruelty, one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

Mir. Ay, ay, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your lover—and then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be! Nay, 'tis true; you are no longer handsome when you've lost your lover—your beauty dies upon the instant; for beauty is the lover's gift; 'tis he bestows your charms—your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old—whom the looking-

glass mortifies, yet after commendation can be flattered by it, and discover beauties in it—for that reflects our praises, rather than your face.

Mil. O the vanity of these men! Fainall, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us, we were not handsome! Now you must know they could not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the lover's gift! Lord, what is a lover that it can give? Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases; and then if one pleases, one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why, you make no more of making of lovers, madam, than of making so many card-matches.

Mil. One no more owes one's beauty to a lover, than one's wit to an echo. They can but reflect what we look and say—vain empty things if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

Mir. Yet to those two vain empty things you owe two of the greatest pleasures of your life.

Mil. How so?

Mir. To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves praised: and to an echo the pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

Wit. But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an echo fair play: she has that everlasting rotation of tongue: that an echo must wait till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

Mil. O fiction! Fainall let us leave these men.

Mir. Draw off Witwoud. [*Aside to Mrs. Fainall.*]

Mrs. Fain. Immediately. I have a word or two for Mr. Witwoud.

SCENE VI.

Mrs. Millamant, Mirabell, and Mincing.

Mir. I would beg a little private audience too—you had the tyranny to deny me last night: though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concerned my love.

Mil. You saw I was engaged.

Mir. Unkind! You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools: things who visit you from their excessive idleness: bestowing on your easiness that time which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society? It is impossible they should admire you, they are not capable, or if they were, it should be to you as a mortification, for sure to please a fool is some degree of folly.

Mil. I please myself—besides, sometimes to converse with fools is for my health.

Mir. Your health! is there a worse disease than the conversation of fools?

Mil. Yes, the vapours: fools are physic for it, next to assafoetida.

Mir. You are not in a course of fools?

Mil. Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom, you'll displease me. I think I must resolve, after all, not to have you. We shan't agree.

Mir. Not in our physic, it may be.

Mil. And yet our distemper in all likelihood will be the same: for we shall be sick of one another, I shan't endure to be reprimanded nor instructed: 'tis so dull to act always by advice, and so tedious to be told of one's faults. I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you, Mirabell. I'm resolved—I think—you may go—ha! ha! ha! What would you give, that you could help loving me?

Mir. I would give something that you did not know I could not help it.

Mil. Come, don't look so grave then. Well, what do you say to me?

Mir. I say that a man may as soon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a woman by plain-dealing and sincerity.

Mil. Sententious, Mirabell! Prithee, don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child in an old tapestry hanging.

Mir. You are merry, madam, but I would persuade you for a moment to be serious.

Mil. What, with that face? no, if you keep your countenance, 'tis impossible I should hold mine. Well,

after all, there is something very moving in a love-sick face. Ha! ha! ha! well, I won't laugh—don't be peevish. Heigho! now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you will win me, woo me now. Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well! I see they are walking away.

Mir. Can you not find in the variety of your disposition one moment——

Mil. To hear you tell me Foible's married, and your plot like to speed—no.

Mir. But, how came you to know it?

Mil. Without the help of the devil, you can't imagine: unless she should tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to consider: and when you have done thinking of that, think of me.

SCENE VII.—MIRABELL.

Mir. I have something more ——. Gone! Think of you? to think of a whirlwind, though 'twere in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation: a very tranquillity of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in a windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodged in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn and by which they are not turned: and by one as well as another, for motion not method is their occupation. To know this and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct.

GEORGE FARQUHAR.

BORN 1678—DIED 1707.

GEORGE FARQUHAR, a dramatist, inferior only to Congreve in wit, but superior to him in gaiety and enduring popularity, was born in Derry in 1678. He entered the University of Dublin in 1694. In consequence of the death of his father, who was a clergyman in the north of Ireland, where he held a small living, Farquhar was compelled to leave the College before completing his entire course. His necessities as well as his tastes pointed out the stage as a means of subsistence; and being acquainted with Wilks (the celebrated actor,) he received from him a recommendation to the manager of the theatre in Smock Alley.* Like most young actors he made his first attempt in tragedy, and came out in the year 1695, in the character of Othello. His success was considerable, and he received in consequence a permanent engagement at the theatre, at the low salary, however, of twenty shillings per week. His connection with Smock Alley continued for two years, and would probably have lasted much longer, but for an ac-

* The Smock Alley Theatre, so celebrated in all our old dramatic annals, stood upon the site of the present Roman Catholic Church of St. Michael and St. John.

cident. Performing the part of *Guyomar* in the "*Indian Emperor*" of Dryden, in the scene where *Vasquez* is killed, he forgot that he bore a real sword instead of a foil, and wounded a brother performer so dangerously, that his life was for some time despaired of. This accident so shocked the tender nature of Farquhar that he determined to abandon the profession, and never acted again. It is conjectured with great probability that Farquhar, notwithstanding his agreeable person and beautiful manner of reading, would never have attained any considerable eminence as an actor. His voice though sweet was much too weak for the necessities of the theatre, and his timidity was of that invincible kind, as no amount of encouragement or practice could overcome. As Wilks was instrumental in making Farquhar an actor, he has also the merit of encouraging him to enter on the higher career of authorship, having had discrimination enough to perceive the great talents which were concealed under the timid exterior of the young tragedian. The commission which Farquhar held in the regiment, commanded by Lord Orrery in Ireland, is also stated to have been acquired by the recommendation of his friend Wilks to that nobleman. In 1698, Farquhar's first play, with its "gay, officer-like" title, "*Love and a Bottle*," was brought out at Drury Lane, with great success, and was succeeded, in 1700, by "*The Constant Couple*," which had a run in London of fifty-three, and in Dublin of twenty-three nights.

The author, says Leigh Hunt, opens this piece (*Love and a Bottle*,) in a way which, in all pro-

bability, was characteristic of his condition at the time, as well as of the good-natured sort of genius which the world was to expect of him. His hero enters, full of poverty and animal spirits, with a dramatic quotation in his mouth, an intimation of his wish to turn soldier, and with evidence of a tolerating disposition in the midst of his sarcasm.

ACT I.—SCENE—LINCOLN'S-INN FIELDS.

Enter Roebuck, in a riding-habit, solus (repeating the following line :)

“Thus far our arms have with success been crown'd.” Heroically spoken, i'faith, of a fellow that has not one farthing in his pocket. If I have one penny to buy a halter withal, in my present necessity, may I be hanged :—though I am reduced to a fair way of obtaining one methodically, very soon, if robbery or theft will purchase the gallows. But hold—can't I rob honourably by turning soldier?

Enter a Cripple, begging.

Crip. One farthing to the poor old soldier, for the Lord's sake!

Roe. Ha! a glimpse of damnation, just as a man is entering into sin, is no great policy of the devil. But, how long did you bear arms, friend?

Crip. Five years, an't please you, sir.

Roe. And how long has that honourable crutch borne you?

Crip. Fifteen, sir.

Roe. Very pretty, five years a soldier, and fifteen a beggar! Thy condition, fellow, is preferable to mine: The merciful bullet, more kind than thy ungrateful country, has given thee a debenture in thy broken leg, from which thou canst draw a more plentiful maintenance, than I from all my limbs in perfection. Prithee,

friend, why shouldst thou beg of *me*? Dost think I am rich?

Crip. No, sir; and, therefore, I believe you charitable. Your warm fellows are so much above the *sense* of our misery, that they *can't* pity us.

“In the summer and autumn of 1700,” continues Mr. Hunt, “we find our author in Holland, probably with his regiment awaiting the anti-gallican movements of King William, which, however, came to little or nothing that season: nor does it appear that Farquhar ever saw any very hot service, whatever proofs he may have given of his aptitude for it. In his sympathy with those around him, and his zeal for the security of the Revolution, he persuaded himself that a knowledge of the Dutch language was necessary to the interests of his countrymen: and lamented that young gentlemen preferred going to France instead of Holland, in order to see the world: opinions that sound oddly enough from the lips of the lively Farquhar. But, like all wits of a high order, he had gravity as well as levity in his composition: and was easily attracted towards whatever he thought of importance to his fellow-creatures. In October, William returned to the Hague, where Farquhar then was, from one of his visits to his retreat at Loo: and the young dramatist and officer, destined to be one of the honours of his reign, and share a duration with posterity of which the phlegmatic sovereign little dreamt, appears to have come back to England in his train.”*

* Biographical and critical notices prefixed to Moxon's ed. p. 66.

"*Sir Harry Wildair*," a continuation of the "*Constant Couple*," appeared the following year. In 1702, he published "*Miscellanies*," a small collection of letters, poems, and essays. According to Mr. Hunt it has little merit, with the exception of an "*Essay on Comedy*," and was probably got together under some pressure of pecuniary trouble. One of the best pieces is a portrait of himself, painted with evidence of much candour and modesty, and yet to his advantage; and we doubt not it was a true one.

"*The Inconstant; or, the Way to Win him*," founded on Fletcher's "*Wild Goose Chase*," appeared in 1703; but not with as much success as might be supposed from its having kept possession of the stage. It was hurt by the reigning fashion for dancers from the Continent, and the critics appear to have been greatly divided about itself: why, it is no longer very clear. The lovers of the old poetic play resented perhaps the author's free and easy way of almost appropriating it to himself in his prose version.

As this is about the time that Farquhar married, we are led to glance round upon his previous life, and to wish to know more of it. Little, however, can be collected, and his letters want dates for what there can. Some of them are written from Gray's Inn, and another from the Inner Temple: probably from coffee-houses: though anybody may live in an inn of court. When he was in Holland, he visited the Brill, Leyden, Rotterdam, and the Hague.* On his

* "In 1704 he again visited Dublin; failing in a subscription for his works he obtained leave from the Duke

return we find him at one time in Essex, hare-hunting (not in the style of a proficient): at another at Richmond, sick: and at a third in Shropshire, on a recruiting party, where he was treated with great hospitality, and found the materials for one of the best of his plays. When he was in Holland, he appears to have rescued a lady from some villanous design upon her. She was the same with whom he afterwards condoles in one of the letters, upon a suspicious robbery which she said she had undergone. Probably it was the woman he married.

At what exact time this marriage took place, whether it was before or after the production of the "*Inconstant*," we cannot say: but the event itself was almost as dramatic as any in his writings: though, unfortunately, more tragic in its results. A lady had fallen in love with him, and knew of no better way to recommend herself as his wife, than by pretending to be in possession of a fortune. The grateful and gallant dramatist took the wife without being so unpolite as to secure the fortune: and though the lady confessed to him that her love had played him a trick; or rather, perhaps, out of a secret and not unamiable vanity of comfort in the very confession, Farquhar not only forgave her, but never breathed to her a syllable of reproach.

Our author's dramatic productions now keep a remarkable regularity of pace with the dates of

of Ormond, Lord Lieutenant, to perform his own '*Sir Harry Wildair*' for a benefit, and made a hundred pounds by it."—*Hitchcock's Irish Stage*.

the years. The "*Inconstant*" came out as we have seen in 1703: 1704 produced the "*Stage Coach*." The "*Twin Rivals*" followed in 1705. The "*Recruiting Officer*," a great advance upon his previous dramas, in the year following: and the "*Beaux Stratagem*," his last and best, in 1707. These dates do not exactly coincide with the printed editions, but it is likely that Farquhar would produce a play a year, and with an eye to the payment of annual debts. The wonder, indeed is, that he did not write oftener, considering his wit and poverty: but he had also the duties of his regiment to attend to, and his health was not good. It is thought to have declined with the discovery of the deception that had been put upon him, or perhaps we should rather say, with the increase of the anxious tenderness, which it caused in him towards a growing family.

This anxiety subjected him to another deception, which is thought to have occasioned his death. Some patron filling him with hopes of another kind of preferment, which he represented as certain, tempted him to sell out of the army. The poor dramatist, when the proceeds were spent, found the patron without truth, and himself without a prospect or a penny. He took to his sick chair; retained enough of the blissful abstraction of genius to write the "*Beaux Stratagem*" in six weeks; and died during the height of its success, before he had attained his thirtieth year! He is supposed to have been buried in the church yard of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.*

* Leigh Hunt, pp. 67, 68.

Well, being the man he was, says his kindred and sympathising biographer, and giving a great deal of pleasure to his fellow-creatures, he must, upon the whole, have had a far happier life of it, than a melancholy—yet, a great sorrow remains to be told. We hardly know whether pleasure or grief predominates, when we read his dying thanks to Wilks, in his short preface—reminding us of the more exquisite words on the like occasion, addressed to the Conde de Lemos, by the great Cervantes, and prefixed to his romance of “*Persiles and Sigismunda* :” but, what are we to think were his feelings, when he wrote the following death-bed letter to Wilks :—

“**DEAR BOB**—I have not anything to leave thee to perpetuate my memory, but two helpless girls. Look upon them, sometimes, and think of him that was, to the last moment of his life, thine,

“**GEORGE FARQUHAR.**”

This simple brevity, and even the gay familiarity of the address, has something in it affecting beyond the ordinary, and, in some measure, self-repaying solemnity of tragical expressions. And our sorrow is heightened, when we hear one of his biographers telling us, that he had often heard Farquhar say, he would rather undergo the most violent death than think of his family wanting needful support.

It is melancholy to think that his friend was either neglectful or incapable of discharging the tender trust committed to him. It is mentioned ^{that} Farquhar's widow died in circumstances of

the utmost indigence : that one of his daughters was married to a low tradesman, and died soon after ; and that the other was living in 1764, in mean and indigent circumstances, without any knowledge of refinement, either in sentiment or expenses—seeming to take no pride in her father's fame, and, in every respect, fitted to her humble station. This humble station, we believe, was that of a maid-servant.*

Mr. Hunt sums up his estimate of the genius and character of Farquhar in the following words :—

“ In short, our author was a good-natured, sensitive, reflecting man, of so high an order of what may be called the *town-class* of genius, as to sympathise with mankind at large, upon the strength of what he saw of them in little, and to extract from a quintessence of good sense, an inspiration just short of the romantic and imaginative—that is to say, he could turn what he had experienced in common life to the best account, but required, in all cases, the support of its ordinary associations, and could not project his spirit beyond them. He felt the little world too much, and the universal too little. He saw into all false pretensions, but not into all true ones ; and, if he had had a larger sphere of nature to fall back upon in his adversity, would probably not have died of it. The wings of his fancy were too common, and grown in too artificial an air, to support him in the sudden gulfs and great aching voids of that new region, and enable him

* Leigh Hunt, p. 69.

to beat his way to their green islands. His genius was so entirely social, that, notwithstanding what appeared to the contrary in his personal manners, and what he took for his own superiority to it, it compelled him to assume in his writings all the airs of the most received town ascendancy: and when it had once warmed itself in this way, it would seem that it had attained the healthiness natural to its best condition, and could have gone on for ever, increasing both in enjoyment and power, had external circumstances been favourable. He was becoming gayer and gayer, when death, in the shape of a sore anxiety, called him away, as if from a pleasant party, and left the house ringing with his jest."

SCENE FROM "THE RECRUITING OFFICER."

[In the "*Recruiting Officer*," Farquhar threw himself entirely upon his animal spirits, and produced accordingly one of his very best plays. In every thing connected with it he was fortunate: for he went only upon grounds of truth, and observation, and his own impulses. The humours were drawn from what he had seen while on a recruiting party: his hospitable friends "round the Wrekin" to whom it was dedicated, furnished some of the characters: the play was written on the spot: his colonel and his general liked it (Lord Orrery and the Duke of Ormond): the principal *dramatis personæ* were represented by the best reigning performers (Wilks, Cibber, Estcourt, and Mrs. Oldfield): and it gained that kind of success, from which the author might have foreseen that it would retain possession of the stage. The names of the several persons represented under fictitious names in this play have been given by Nichols, on the authority of an old lady who remembered Farquhar and his recruiting party. *Plume* was of course pronounced to be "himself;" but if the play, as it is asserted, and is probable, was written within a year of the "*Beaux Stratagem*," the gay captain could only have been the imaginary Farquhar: gay enough, we doubt not, while so imagining, but in his own person, an anxious married man. Steele, who had a grudge against Farquhar, because he thought him wanting in sentiment, attributed the "support" of the play to the admirable performance of his friend Estcourt. "There is not," he says, "in my humble opinion, the humour hit in

Sergeant Kite: but it is admirably supplied by his action." Succeeding times have not accorded with this criticism. Every character in the piece of any prominence, is thought to be a genuine transcript from nature: and there is a charm of gaiety and good-humour throughout it, that enables us to put the best and least tragical construction upon certain anti-sentimentalities, which Steele perhaps was too much out of his customary good-humour to choose to consider in any light but one. We seem to breathe the clear, fresh, ruddy making air of a remote country-town, neighboured by hospitable elegancies. The sturdy male peasants will find their legs in life somehow, as the *sergeant* has done: and the females will be taken more care of by the *captain* himself, and by the good-natured *Sylvia* too, than the censor at first sight might suppose. The morals are not the best, we allow: and especially in the matter of *lying* which always gives us a pang,) they may be infinitely improved, as we doubt not they will, though not from the austere quarters. When the best morals arrive, everybody will be as happily taken care of as the "ladies" themselves: not the case certainly at present, nor provided for by the prospective ethics of dear excellent Richard Steele.—LEIGH HUNT.]

SCENE V.—ACT V. A COURT OF JUSTICE.

Justices Balance, Scale, and Scruple, discovered upon the bench; Serjeant Kite, Constable, and mob, in attendance.

Kite. [*Aside to Constable.*] Pray, who are those honourable gentlemen upon the bench?

Con. He in the middle is Justice Balance, he on the right is Justice Scale, and he on the left is Justice Scruple—and I am Mr. Constable—four very honest gentlemen.

Kite. O, dear sir! I am your most obedient servant. [*Saluting him.*] I fancy, sir, that your employment and mine are much the same; for my business is to keep people in order, and if they disobey, to knock 'em down—and then we are both staff-officers.

Con. Nay, I'm a serjeant myself—of the militia. Come, brother, you shall see me exercise. Suppose this is a musquet now; now I am shouldered.

[*Puts his staff on the right shoulder.*]

Kite. Ay, you are shouldered pretty well for a constable's staff; but for a musket, you must put it on t'other shoulder, my dear.

Con. Adso! that's true. Come, now give the word of command.

Kite. Silence!

Con. Ay, ay, so we will—we will be silent.

Kite. Silence, you dog, silence!

[*Strikes him over the head with his halberd.*]

Con. That's the way to silence a man with a witness. What d'ye mean, friend?

Kite. Only to exercise you, sir.

Con. Your exercise differs so from our's, that we shall ne'er agree about it. If my own captain had given me such a rap, I had taken the law of him.

Enter Captain Plume.

Bal. Captain, you're welcome.

Plume. Gentlemen, I thank you.

Scrup. Come, honest Captain, sit by me. [*Plume takes his seat upon the bench.*] Now produce your prisoners. Here, that fellow there—set him up. Mr. Constable, what have you to say against this man?

Con. I have nothing to say against him, an' please you.

Bal. No; what made you bring him hither?

Con. I don't know, an' please your worship.

Scale. Did not the contents of your warrant direct you what sort of men to take up?

Con. I can't tell, an' please ye, I can't read.

Scrup. A very pretty constable, truly! I find we have no business here.

Kite. May it please the worshipful bench, I desire to be heard in this case, as being counsel for the queen.

Bal. Come, serjeant, you shall be heard, since nobody else will speak: we won't come here for nothing.

Kite. This man is but one man: the country may spare him, and the army wants him; besides, he's cut out by nature for a grenadier; he's five foot ten inches high; he shall box, wrestle, or dance the Cheshire round with any man in the country; he gets drunk every Sabbath day, and he beats his wife.

Wife. You lie, sirrah! you lie! An' please your worship, he's the best-natur'dst, pains-taking'st man in the parish—witness my five poor children.

Scrup. A wife and five children! you constable, you rogue, how durst you impress a man that has a wife and five children?

Scale. Discharge him ! discharge him !

Bal. Hold, gentlemen ! Hark'ee, friend, how do you maintain your wife and children ?

Plume. They live upon wildfowl and venison, sir ; the husband keeps a gun and kills all the hares and partridges within five miles round.

Bal. A gun ! nay, if he be so good at gunning, he shall have enough on't. He may be of use against the French, for he shoots flying, to be sure.

Scrup. But his wife and children, Mr. Balance !

Wife. Ay, that's the reason you would send him away : you know I have a child every year, and you are afraid they should come upon the parish at last.

Plume. Look'ee then, gentlemen, the honest woman has spoke it at once—the parish had better maintain five children this year, than six or seven the next.

Bal. Send that woman to the house of correction, and the man—

Kite. I'll take care of him, if you please.

[*Takes him down.*

Scale. Here, you constable, the next : set up that black-faced fellow, he has a gunpowder look. What can you say against this man, constable ?

Con. Nothing but that he is a very honest man.

Plume. Pray, gentlemen, let me have one honest man in my company, for the novelty's sake.

Bal. What are you, friend ?

Mob. A collier ; I work in the coal-pits.

Scrup. Look'ee, gentlemen, this fellow has a trade, and the act of parliament here expresses, that we are to impress no man that has any visible means of a livelihood.

Kite. May it please your worships, this man has no visible means of livelihood, for he works under ground.

Plume. Well said, Kite ! Besides, the army want miners.

Bal. Right, and had we an order of government for't, we could raise you in this, and the neighbouring county of Stafford, five hundred colliers, that would run you under ground like moles, and do more service in a siege than all the miners in the army.

Scrup. Well, friend, what have you to say for yourself?

Mob. I'm married.

Kite. Lack-a-day, so am I!

Mob. Here's my wife, poor woman!

Bal. Are you married, good woman?

Wom. I'm married in conscience.

Scale. Who married you, mistress?

Wom. My husband—we 'greed that I should call him husband, and that he should call me wife, to shun going for a soldier.

Scrup. A very pretty couple! Pray, captain, will you take 'em both?

Plume. What say you, Mr. Kite? will you take care of the woman?

Kite. Yes, sir; she shall go with us to the sea-side, and then, if she has a mind to drown herself, we'll take care that nobody shall hinder her.

SCENE FROM THE "BEAUX STRATAGEM."

[Farquhar's chief characters are adventures; but they are adventures of a romantic, not a knavish stamp, and succeed no less by their honesty than their boldness. They conquer their difficulties, and effect their "hair-breadth 'scapes" by the impulse of natural enthusiasm, and the confidence of high principles of gallantry and honour, as much as by their dexterity and readiness at expedients. We have every sort of good-will towards Farquhar's heroes, and seem to like both the author and his favourites. He has humour, character, and invention, added to an unaffected gaiety and spirit of enjoyment, which overflows and sparkles in all he does. He makes us laugh from pleasure oftener than from malice. He somewhere prides himself in having introduced on the stage the class of comic heroes, which has since become a standard character, and which represents the warm-hearted, rattle-brained, thoughtless, high-spirited young fellow, who floats on the back of his misfortunes without repining, who forfeits appearances, but saves his honour: and he gives us to understand that it was his own. He did not need to be ashamed of it. Indeed, there is internal evidence that this sort of character is his own, for it pervades his works generally, and is the moving spirit that informs them. His comedies have on this account, probably, a greater appearance of truth and nature than almost any others. His incidents succeed one another with rapidity, but without premeditation; his wit is easy and spontaneous; his style animated, unembarrassed, and flowing; his characters full of life and spirit, and never overstrained, so as to "o'erstep the modesty of nature," though they sometimes, from haste and

carelessness, seem left in a crude, unfinished state. There is a constant ebullition of gay, laughing invention, cordial good humour, and fine animal spirits, in his writings.

The "*Beaux Stratagem*" is the best of his plays, as a whole, infinitely lively, bustling, and full of point and interest. The assumed disguise of the two principal characters, *Archer* and *Aimwell*, is a perpetual amusement to the mind. *Scrub* is an indispensable appendage to a country gentleman's kitchen, and an exquisite confidant for the secrets of young ladies.—HAZLITT.

The sprightly success of the "*Recruiting Officer*" had, probably, the happiest effect upon the composition of our author's best and most successful production, the "*Beaux Stratagem*," an excellent play, which, like the one just mentioned, and the "*Inconstant*," is always acted whenever actors can be found. Its plot is new, simple, and interesting; the characters various, without confusing it; the dialogue sprightly and characteristic; the moral bold, healthy, admirable, and doubly needed in those times when sottishness was a fashion. *Archer* and *Aimwell*, who set out as mere intriguers, prove in the end true gentlemen, candid, conscientious, and generous. *Scrub* and *Boniface*, though but a servant and an inn-keeper, are quotable fellows both, and have made themselves prominent in theatrical recollection—the former especially, for his quaint ignorance and sordid cunning. And *Mrs. Sullen* is the more touching in her distress, from the cheerfulness with which she wipes away her tears.—LEIGH HUNT.]

ACT III.—SCENE I. THE GALLERY IN LADY BOUNTIFUL'S HOUSE.

Mrs. Sullen, Dorinda, and Scrub.

Dor. Well, Scrub, what news of the gentleman?

Scrub. Madam, I have brought you a packet of news.

Dor. Open it quickly. Come.

Scrub. In the first place, I inquired who the gentleman was; they told me he was a stranger. Secondly, I asked what the gentleman was; they answered and said, that they never saw him before. Thirdly, I inquired what countryman he was; they replied, 'twas more than they knew. Fourthly, I demanded whence he came; their answer was, they could not tell. And, fifthly, I asked whither he went; and they replied they knew nothing of the matter—and this is all I could learn.

Mrs. Sul. But what do the people say? Can't they guess?

Scrub. Why, some think he's a spy, some guess he's a mountebank, some say one thing, some another; but, for my own part, I believe he's a Jesuit.

Dor. A Jesuit! Why a Jesuit?

Scrub. Because he keeps his horses always ready saddled, and his footman talks French.

Mrs. Sul. His footman!

Scrub. Ay, he and the Count's footman were gabbering French like two intriguing ducks in a mill-pond; and I believe they talked of me, for they laughed consumedly.

Dor. What sort of livery has the footman?

Scrub. Livery! Lord, madam, I took him for a captain, he's so bedizzened with lace! And then he has tops to his shoes, up to his mid leg, a silver-headed cane dangling at his knuckles; he carries his hands in his pockets just so. [*Walks about foppishly.*] And has a fine long periwig tied up in a bag. Lord, madam, he's clear another sort of man than I!

Mrs. Sul. That may easily be. But what shall we do now, sister?

Dor. I have it. This fellow has a world of simplicity, and some cunning; the first hides the latter by abundance. Scrub?

Scrub. Madam!

Dor. We have a great mind to know who this gentleman is, only for our satisfaction.

Scrub. Yes, madam, it would be a satisfaction, no doubt.

Dor. You must go and get acquainted with his footman, and invite him hither to drink a bottle of your ale, because you're butler to-day.

Scrub. Yes, madam, I am butler every Sunday.

Mrs. Sul. O brave! sister. O' my conscience, you understand the mathematics already. 'Tis the best plot in the world. Your mother, you know, will be gone to church, my spouse will be got to the alehouse with his scoundrels, and the house will be our own. So we drop in by accident, and ask the fellow some questions ourselves.

Enter Gipsy.

Gip. Ladies, dinner's upon table.

Dor. Scrub, we'll excuse your waiting—go where we ordered you.

Scrub. I shall.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—THE SAME.

Enter Archer and Scrub singing, and hugging one another, the latter with a tankard in his hand. Gipsy listening behind.

Scrub. Tall, all, dall! Come, my dear boy, let's have that song once more.

Arch. No, no, we shall disturb the family. But will you be sure to keep the secret?

Scrub. Pho! Upon my honour, as I'm a gentleman.

Arch. 'Tis enough. You must know then, that my master is the Lord Viscount Aimwell; he fought a duel t'other day in London, wounded his man so dangerously, that he thinks fit to withdraw till he hears whether the gentleman's wounds be mortal or not. He never was in this part of England before. So he chose to retire to this place—that's all.

Gip. And that's enough for me. [Exit.

Scrub. And where were you when your master fought?

Arch. We never know of our master's quarrels.

Scrub. No! If our masters in the country here receive a challenge, the first thing they do is to tell their wives; the wife tells the servants, the servants alarm the tenants, and in half an hour you shall have the whole country in arms.

Arch. To hinder two men from doing what they have no mind for. But if you should chance to talk now of my business?

Scrub. Talk! Ay, sir, had I not learned the knack of holding my tongue, I had never lived so long in a great family.

Arch. Ay, ay, to be sure there are secrets in all families.

Scrub. Secrets! Ay; but I'll say no more. Come, sit down, we'll make an end of our tankard. Here—

[Gives Archer the tankard.

* * * * *

But what d'ye think is my place in this family?

Arch. Butler, I suppose.

Scrub. Ah, Lord help you! I'll tell you. Of a Monday I drive the coach; of a Tuesday I drive the plough; on Wednesday I follow the hounds; on Thursday I dun the tenants; on Friday I go to market; on Saturday I draw warrants, and a Sunday I draw beer.

Arch. Ha! ha! ha! If variety be a pleasure in life, you have enough on't, my dear brother.

Enter Mrs. Sullen and Dorinda.

But what ladies are those?

Scrub. Ours, ours. That upon the right is Mrs. Sullen, and the other is Mrs. Dorinda. Don't mind 'em; sit still man.

[Dorinda and Mrs. Sullen walk towards the opposite side of the stage.]

Arch. *[Aside.]* Corn, wine, and oil indeed!

[Mrs. Sullen drops her glove, which he picks up and presents to her.]

Madam, your ladyship's glove.

Mrs. Sul. O, sir, I thank you! *[To Dorinda.]*

What a handsome bow the fellow has?

Dor. Bow! why I have known several footmen come down from London, set up here for dancing-masters, and carry off the best fortunes in the country.

Arch. *[Aside.]* That project, for aught I know, had been better than ours. *[To Scrub.]* Brother Scrub, why don't you introduce me?

Scrub. Ladies, this is the strange gentleman's servant that you see at church to-day. I understood he came from London, and so I invited him to the cellar, that he might show me the newest flourish in whetting my knives.

Dor. And I hope you have made much of him?

Arch. O yes, madam; but the strength of your ladyship's liquor is a little too potent for the constitution of your humble servant.

Mrs. Sul. What then, you don't usually drink ale?

Arch. No, madam. My constant drink is tea, or a little wine and water. 'Tis prescribed me by the physician, for a remedy against the spleen.

Scrub. O la! O la! A footman have the spleen.

Mrs. Sul. I thought that distemper had been only proper to people of quality?

Arch. Madam, like all other fashions it wears out, and so descends to their servants; though in a great many of us, I believe, it proceeds from some melancholy particles in the blood, occasioned by the stagnation of wages.

Dor. [*Aside to Mrs. Sullen.*] How affectedly the fellow talks! [*To Archer.*] How long, pray, have you served your present master?

Arch. Not long; my life has been mostly spent in the service of the ladies.

Mrs. Sul. And pray, which service do you like best?

Arch. Madam, the ladies pay best; the honour of serving them is sufficient wages; there is a charm in their looks that delivers a pleasure with their commands, and gives our duty the wings of inclination.

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] That flight was above the pitch of a livery. [*Aloud.*] And, sir, would not you be satisfied to serve a lady again?

Arch. Not as a footman, madam.

Mrs. Sul. I suppose you served as footman before?

Arch. For that reason I would not serve in that post again; for my memory is too weak for the load of messages that the ladies lay upon their servants in London. My Lady Howd'ye, the last mistress I served, called me up one morning, and told me, Martin, go to my Lady Allnight with my humble service; tell her I was to wait on her ladyship yesterday, and left word with Mrs. Rebecca, that the preliminaries of the affair she knows of, are stopped till we know the concurrence of the person that I know of, for which there are circumstances wanting which we shall accommodate at the old place; but that in the mean time there is a person about her ladyship, that from several hints and surmises, was accessory at a certain time to the disappointments that naturally attend things, that to her knowledge are of more importance——

Mrs. Sul., Dor. Ha! ha! ha! Where are you going, sir?

Arch. Why, I ha'n't half done! The whole how d'ye was about half an hour long. So I happened to misplace

two syllables, and was turned off, and rendered incapable.

Dor. [*Aside to Mrs. Sullen.*] The pleasantest fellow, sister, I ever saw. [*To Archer.*] But, friend, if your master be married, I presume you still serve a lady?

Arch. No, madam. I take care never to come into a married family. The commands of the master and mistress are always so contrary, that 'tis impossible to please both.

Dor. There's a main point gained: my Lord is not married, I find. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Sul. But I wonder, friend, that in so many good services, you had not a better provision made for you.

Arch. I don't know how, madam. I had a lieutenancy offered me three or four times; but that is not bread, madam. I live much better as I do.

Scrub. Madam, he sings rarely! I was thought to do pretty well here in the country till he came; but, alack a day, I'm nothing to my brother Martin!

Dor. Does he? Pray, sir, will you oblige us with a song?

Arch. Are you for passion or humour?

Scrub. O le! he has the purest ballad about a trifle.

Mrs. Sul. A trifle! Pray, sir, let's have it.

Arch. I'm ashamed to offer you a trifle, madam; but since you command me—— [*Sings.*

A trifling song you shall hear,
Begun with a trifle and ended;
All trifling people draw near,
And I shall be nobly attended.

Were it not for trifles, a few
That lately have come into play,
The men would want something to do,
And the women want something to say.

What makes men trifle in dressing?
Because the ladies (they know)
Admire, by often possessing,
That eminent trifle, a beau.

What mortal man would be able
At White's half an hour to sit?
Or who could bear a tea-table,
Without talking of trifles for wit?

The Court is from trifles secure,
Gold keys are no trifles, we see;
White rods are no trifles, I'm sure,
Whatever their bearers may be.

But if you will go to the place,
Where trifles abundantly breed,
The levee will show you his grace
Make promises trifles indeed.

A coach with six footmen behind,
I count neither trifle nor sin:
But, ye gods! how oft do we find
A scandalous trifle within.

A flask of champagne, people think it
A trifle, or something as bad:
But if you'll contrive how to drink it,
You'll find it no trifle, egad!

A parson's a trifle at sea,
A widow's a trifle in sorrow:
A peace is a trifle to-day,
Who knows what may happen to-morrow!

A black coat, a trifle may cloak,
Or to hide it, the red may endeavour:
But if once the army is broke,
We shall have more trifles than ever.

But with people's malice to trifle,
 And to set us all on a foot:
 The author of this is a trifle,
 And his song is a trifle to boot.

Mrs. Sul. Very well, sir, we're obliged to you. Something for a pair of gloves. [*Offering him money.*]

Arch. I humbly beg leave to be excused: my master, madam, pays me: nor dare I take money from any other hand, without injuring his honour, and disobeying his commands. [*Exit with Scrub.*]

[FARQUHAR'S ACCOUNT OF DRYDEN'S FUNERAL.]

I come now from Mr. Dryden's funeral, where we had an ode in Horace sung, instead of David's Psalms; whence you may find, that we don't think a poet worth Christian burial. The pomp of the ceremony was a kind of rhapsody, and fitter I think for Hudibrass than him, because the cavalcade was mostly burlesque; but he was an extraordinary man, and buried after an extraordinary fashion: for I do believe there was never such another burial seen. The oration was great and ingenious, worthy the subject, and like the author, whose prescriptions can restore the living, and his pen embalm the dead.* And so much for Mr. Dryden, whose burial was the same with his life: variety and not of a piece: the quality and mob, farce and heroics; the sublime and ridicule mixt in a piece: great Cleopatra in a hackney-coach.

* Garth.

[FARQUHAR'S ESTATE.]

I have very little estate, but what lies under the circumference of my hat: and should I by mischance come to lose my head, I should not be worth a groat: but I ought to thank Providence that I can by three hours study live one-and-twenty with satisfaction to myself, and contribute to the maintenance of more families than some who have thousands a year.

[LAWFUL FREEDOM OF THE DRAMA FROM "CLASSIC RULES," FROM THE "ESSAY ON COMEDY."]

The rules of English comedy don't lie in the compass of Aristotle, or his followers—but, in the pit, box, and galleries. And to examine into the humour of an English audience, let us see by what means our own English poets have succeeded in this point. To determine a suit at law we don't look into the archives of Greece and Rome, but inspect the reports of our lawyers and the acts and statutes of our parliaments: and by the same rule we have nothing to do with the models of Menander or Plautus, but must consult Shakespeare, Jonson, Fletcher, and others, who, by methods much different from the ancients, have supported the English stage, and made themselves famous to posterity. We shall find that these gentlemen have fairly dispensed with the greatest part of critical formalities: the decorums of time and place, so much cried up of

late, had no force of decorum with them: the economy of their plays was *ad libitum*, and the extent of their plots only limited by the convenience of action. I would willingly understand the regularities of "*Hamlet*," "*Macbeth*," "*Henry the Fourth*," and of Fletcher's plays: and yet those have long been the darlings of the English audience, and are like to continue with the same applause, in defiance of all the criticisms that ever were published in Greek and Latin.

* * * * *

A play may be written with all the exactness imaginable, in respect of unity in time and place: but if you inquire its character of any person, though of the meanest understanding, of the whole audience, he will tell you it is intolerable stuff: and upon your demanding his reasons, his answer is, "I don't like it:" his humour is the only rule that he can judge a comedy by, but you find that mere nature is offended with some irregularities: and though he be not so learned in the drama, to give you an inventory of the faults, yet I can tell you, that one part of the plot had no dependance upon another, which made this simple man drop his attention and concern for the event: and so disengaging his thoughts from the business of the action, he sat there very uneasy, thought the time very tedious, because he had nothing to do. The characters were so incoherent in themselves, and composed of such variety of absurdities, that in his knowledge of nature he could find no original for such

a copy : and being therefore unacquainted with any folly they reprov'd, or any virtue that they recommended, their business was as flat and tiresome to him, as if the actors had talk'd Arabic.

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I am as little a friend to certain rambling plays as anybody, nor have I ever espoused their party by my own practice : yet I could not forbear saying something in vindication of the great Shakespeare, whom every little fellow than can form an *aoristus primus* will presume to condemn for indecorums and absurdities : sparks that are so spruce upon their Greek and Latin, that like our fops in travels, they can relish nothing but what is foreign, to let the world know they have been abroad, forsooth ! But it must be so, because Aristotle said it ! Now, I say it must be otherwise, because Shakespeare said it : and I am sure that Shakespeare was the greater poet of the two. But you will say that Aristotle was the greater critic. That's a mistake, sir ; for criticism in poetry is no more than judgment in poetry : which you will find in your lexicon. Now, if Shakespeare was the better poet, he must have the most judgment in his art : for everybody knows that judgment is an essential part of poetry, and without it no writer is worth a farthing.

SIR RICHARD STEELE.

BORN 1676—DIED 1729.

SIR RICHARD STEELE was born in Dublin in 1676. His father was a member of the Irish Bar, and private secretary to the Duke of Ormond, through whose influence he was enabled to send his son to the Charter House, London, for his education. A branch of the family possessed considerable property in the county of Wexford. In 1692, Steele was admitted a post master in Merton College, Oxford. There is very little known respecting his academical career, except that during that period he composed a comedy which he afterwards destroyed, and that he left the University without taking a degree. Whether owing to necessity or inclination, the next thing we hear of him is, his having enlisted, like Coleridge, as a private soldier in the Horse Guards. By this step he not only lost the friendship of his family, but also the succession to his Irish estate. However, as he had a flow of good nature, a generous openness and frankness of spirit, and a sparkling vivacity of wit; these qualities rendered him the delight of the soldiery, and procured him an ensign's commission in the Guards. Feeling that he might not be able to resist the temptations incident to his age and situation, he drew up a little treatise for his own admonition, and which is well known, even now, entitled the "*Christian Hero.*" It

was printed in the year 1701, at which time Steele was secretary to Lord Cutts, and had, by his means, obtained a company in Lord Lucas's regiment of Fusileers. The whole plan and tenor of this book were so opposed to the habits of the author, as to subject him to a good deal of railery from his "brother rakes," who were amused at finding "a moralist" in him. Notwithstanding the mirth of his companions, he persevered in the same contradiction, and seemed anxious to atone for the irregularities of his life, by the comparative morality of his writings. Fearing that his character for wit might be damaged by his advocacy of religion, he thought it necessary to "enliven his character" by producing a comedy, and he consequently brought out his first play, "*The Funeral ; or, Grief A-la-Mode*," in 1702. This comedy has been considered by some as the best of Steele's dramatic pieces. The conduct of it is ingenious, the characters are pointed, the language is sprightly, and the satire strong and genuine. William the Third was so pleased with it, as to inquire after the author, upon whom he proposed to bestow some substantial mark of favour, which however was prevented by his own death.

In the beginning of Queen Anne's reign he was appointed to the post of Gazette writer ; an appointment, such as it was, for which he was indebted to his school-fellow, Addison, who recommended him to Lord Halifax and the Earl of Sunderland. He also pursued his career as a writer, and produced his comedy of "*The Tender Husband*," which was acted in 1703 with

great success. The morality of this play is pure, the humour genuine, and the characters are well drawn and contrasted. The prologue was written by Addison, to whom the play is dedicated. In 1704, his next comedy, "*The Lying Lover*," was produced, but with very different success. He says himself that it "was damned for its piety." In his "*Apology for Himself and his Writings*," he alludes to this play in the following words: "I have carried my inclination to the advancement of virtue so far, as to pursue it even in things the most indifferent, and which perhaps have been thought foreign to it. To give you an instance of this, sir, I must mention a comedy called the "*Lying Lover*," which I writ some years ago; the preface to which says:

"Though it ought to be the care of all governments, that public representations should have nothing in them but what is agreeable to the manners, laws, religion, and policy of the place or nation wherein they are exhibited: yet, it is the general complaint of the more learned and virtuous amongst us, that the English stage has extremely offended in this kind and thought; therefore, it would be an honest ambition to attempt a comedy, which might be no improper entertainment in a christian commonwealth."

The ill success of "*The Lying Lover*," was a fortunate circumstance for the permanent fame of Steele, as by giving him a distaste for the stage, where it is not probable he would have ever attained any very extraordinary eminence, he was enabled to direct the current of his humour into a more natural channel, and thus create a name for

himself which must last as long as the English language. In 1709 appeared the first number of the "Tatler," a periodical or collection of essays, which on the whole is only inferior to its still more celebrated successor, the "Spectator." Its main object was to improve the morals and manners, by holding up to ridicule fashionable follies and vices of every kind, and inculcating regard to the proper decorum of social life. Steele was eminently qualified for this undertaking, by a knowledge of the world, acquired in free converse with it, by natural humour and vivacity, and by a generous and benevolent way of thinking. He had likewise the felicity of being able to engage coadjutors of great talents, among whom were Addison and Swift. In the "Tatler" politics were introduced, (in the "Spectator" they were wisely omitted,) and it is probable that the appointment which Steele received in 1710, as a commissioner of stamps, was given as a reward for political services. Notwithstanding the change of ministry and the downfall of his patron, the Duke of Marlborough, in 1711, Steele was allowed to retain his situation. In 1711 the "Tatler" was discontinued, and the "Spectator" started, it continued to be published till the year 1713, and was succeeded by the "Guardian," which also ceased the same year. He now devoted himself principally to politics—engaged warmly against the ministry and resigned his office in the Stamp Office, and also gave up a pension which he had hitherto received, as having belonged to the household of the late Prince George of Denmark. This done he wrote the famous

"Guardian," upon the demolition of Dunkirk, which was published August 7, 1713; this was followed by several other warm political tracts against the administration.

Upon the meeting of parliament, Steele, who had been returned a member for the borough of Stockbridge, in Hampshire, took his seat in the House of Commons, but was expelled in a few days after, as being the author of certain publications, voted by the House to be "seditious and scandalous libels." Immediately after his expulsion he engaged in several literary speculations, which were continued until the accession of George the First, when he was again taken into favour and appointed surveyor to the royal stables at Hampton Court, and put into the commission of the peace for the county of Middlesex. In the same year, 1714, having procured a license to be chief manager of the royal company of comedians, he had interest enough to get this license exchanged into a patent, appointing him governor of the said company during his life. In the first parliament of the new reign he again entered the House, as member for Boroughbridge, in Yorkshire, and received the honour of knighthood on the 28th April, 1715—on the presentation of an address—and in the following August he received five hundred pounds from Sir Robert Walpole for special services. Thus highly encouraged he devoted his entire energies to the cause with which he had identified himself, and which in good and evil fortune he seemed to have most at heart. In 1717 he visited Scotland, as one of the commissioners for inquiring

into the estates forfeited by the late rebellion in that country; while there, he endeavoured to effect an union between the Scotch and English churches. In 1718 he buried his second wife, who had brought him a handsome fortune and a good estate in Wales, but neither that nor the ample additions lately made to his income were sufficient to answer his demands. The thoughtless vivacity of his spirit often reduced him to have recourse to some extraordinary expedients. One of these was a project to carry fish alive to market, for which he obtained a patent, which, instead of mending his circumstances only involved him in greater difficulties. Notwithstanding these embarrassments, he found time to warn the country against the mischievous South Sea scheme, which nearly reduced it to ruin, in 1720. In the following year he was restored to his office at Drury Lane, of which he had been deprived for opposing the Peerage Bill in the House of Commons, and produced his celebrated play of "*The Conscious Lovers*." "The first moral comedy," says Hallam, "since the reign of Charles the First." It was acted with great success, so that the receipts must have been very considerable, besides the profits accruing by the sale of the copy, and a purse of five hundred pounds, given to him by the king, to whom it was dedicated. Yet in the next year we find him overwhelmed with difficulties; he sold his share in the theatre, and soon after commenced a law-suit with the managers, which in 1726 was decided against him. Broken in constitution and in fortune he retired to his seat at Langunnor,

near Carmarthen in Wales, where he died on the 21st of September, 1729.*

“Steele,” says Mr. Macauley, “had known Addison from childhood. They had been together at the Charter House and at Oxford: but circumstances had then, for a time, separated them widely. Steele had left college without taking a degree, had been disinherited by a rich relation, had led a vagrant life, had served in the army, had tried to find the philosopher’s stone, and had written a religious treatise and several comedies. He was one of those people whom it is impossible either to hate or to respect. His temper was sweet, his affections warm, his spirits lively, his passions strong, and his principles weak. His life was spent in sinning and repenting: in inculcating what was right, and doing what was wrong. In speculation he was a man of piety and honour: in practice he was much of the rake and a little of the swindler. He was, however, so good-natured, that it was not easy to be seriously angry with him, and that even rigid moralists felt more inclined to pity than to blame him, when he dived himself into a sponging-house or drank himself into a fever. Addison regarded Steele with kindness not unmingled with scorn—tried, with little success, to keep him out of scrapes, introduced him to the great, procured a good place for him, corrected his plays, and, though by no means rich, lent him large sums of money. One of these loans appears, from a letter dated in August, 1708,

* *Biographia Dramatica.* Rees’ *Encyclopedia.*

to have amounted to a thousand pounds. These pecuniary transactions probably led to frequent bickerings. It is said that on one occasion, Steele's negligence, or dishonesty, provoked Addison to repay himself by the help of a bailiff. [Some doubt has been thrown on this transaction, but not with much probability.] The real history, we have little doubt, was something like this:—A letter comes to Addison, imploring help in pathetic terms, and promising reformation and speedy repayment. Poor Dick declares that he has not an inch of candle, or a bushel of coals, or credit with the butcher for a shoulder of mutton. Addison is moved. He determines to deny himself some medals which are wanting to his series of the Twelve Cæsars—to put off buying the new edition of “Bayle's Dictionary;” and to wear his old sword and buckles another year. In this way he manages to lend a hundred pounds to his friend. The next day he calls on Steele, and finds scores of gentlemen and ladies assembled—the fiddles are playing—the table is groaning under Champagne, Burgundy, and pyramids of sweetmeats. Is it strange that a man whose kindness is thus abused—should send sheriff's officers to reclaim what is due to him?*

SCENE FROM “THE CONSCIOUS LOVERS.”

[The general design of this celebrated comedy, which had been written some years before it was acted, and at first intended to be called “*The Unfashionable Lovers*,” (or as some say “*The Fine Gentleman*,”) is taken from the “*Andria*” of Terence: but the author's principal intention in writing it was, to introduce the very fine scene in the fourth act, between young Bevil and Myrtle, which sets forth in a

* Edinburgh Review, July 1843.

strong light, the folly of duelling, and the absurdity of what is called the *point of honour*. This play was acted twenty-six nights the first season: yet, before it appeared it excited the envy and ill-humour of Dennis, who, while it was in rehearsal, published a pamphlet (alluding to Sir Richard Steele's censure of Etherge's "Man of Mode," in *The Spectator*, No. 65,) under the following title, "A Defence of Sir Fopling Flutter, written by Sir George Etheridge; in which Defence is shown, that Sir Fopling—that Merry Knight—was rightly composed by the Knight his Father, to answer the ends of Comedy; and that he has been barbarously and scurrilously attacked by the Knight his Brother, in the 65th *Spectator*: by which it appears, that the Knight knows nothing of the nature of comedy." The scurrility of this pamphlet, (which was intended to prejudice the public against Steele's forthcoming play,) is implied in the title page; and in the course of his writing he not only reflects illiberally on Steele for being an Irishman, but foolishly calls him a twopenny author, because he wrote the *Tatlers*, *Spectators*, and *Guardians*! In fine, he promised a criticism on "*The Conscious Lovers*," when it should appear on the stage. "Which criticism," says Victor, when it appeared, "was allowed by all to be the most *civil*, and therefore the *dullest* of all his critical writings."—*BIOGRAPHIA DRAMATICA.*]

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

Bevil reading a letter.

Bev. But then this duelling, which custom has imposed upon every man who would live with reputation and honour in the world.—How must I preserve myself from imputations there? He'll forsooth call it, or think it, fear, if I explain without fighting—but his letter—I'll read it again:—

"SIR—You have used me basely, in corresponding, and carrying on a treaty where you told me you were indifferent! I have changed my sword since I saw you, which advertisement I thought proper to send you against the next meeting, between you and the injured
"CHARLES MYRTLE."

Enter Tom.

Tom. Mr. Myrtle, sir; would your honour please to see him?

Bev. Why, you stupid creature! let Mr. Myrtle wait at my lodgings? Shew him up. [*Exit Tom.*] Well! I am resolved upon my carriage to him. He is in love, and in every circumstance of life a little distrustful, which I must allow for; but here he is.

Enter Tom introducing Myrtle.

Sir, I am extremely obliged to you for this honour. But, sir, you with your very discerning face, leave the room. [*Exit Tom.*] Well, Mr. Myrtle, your commands with me?

Myrt. The time, the place, our long acquaintance and many other circumstances which affect me on this occasion, oblige me, without further ceremony, or conference, to desire you would not only, as you already have, acknowledge the receipt of my letter, but also comply with the request in it. I must have further notice taken of my message than these half lines—I have yours—I shall be at home—

Bev. Sir, I own I have received a letter from you in a very unusual style: but as I design every thing in this matter shall be your own action, your own seeking, I shall understand nothing but what you are pleased to confirm face to face, and I have already forgot the contents of your epistle.

Myrt. This cool manner is very agreeable to the abuse you have already made of my simplicity and frankness, and I see your moderation tends to your own advantage and not mine; to your own safety; not consideration of your friend.

Bev. My own safety, Mr. Myrtle!

Myrt. Your own safety, Mr. Bevil.

Bev. Look you, Mr. Myrtle, there's no disguising that I understand what you would be at. But, sir, you know, I have often dared to disapprove of the decisions a tyrant custom has introduced to the breach of laws both divine and human.

Myrt. Mr. Bevil, Mr. Bevil, it would be a good first principle in those who have so tender a conscience that way, to have as much abhorrence of doing injuries, as—

Bev. As what?

Myrt. As fear of answering for them.

Bev. As fear of answering for 'em! But that apprehension is just or blameable, according to the object of that fear. I have often told you in confidence of heart, I abhorred the daring to offend the Author of life, and rushing into his presence. I say, by the very same act to commit the crime against him, and immediately to urge on to his Tribunal.

Myrt. Mr. Bevil, I must tell you, this coolness, this gravity, this show of conscience, shall never cheat me of my mistress. You have, indeed, the best excuse for life, the hopes of marrying Lucinda: But consider, sir, I have as much reason to be weary of it, if I am to lose her; and my first attempt to recover her, shall be to let her see the dauntless man, who is to be her guardian and protector.

Bev. Sir, show me but the least glimpse of argument that I am authorized by my own hand to vindicate any lawless insult of this nature, and I will show thee—to chastise thee hardly deserves the name of courage. Slight, inconsiderate man. There is, Mr. Myrtle, no such term in quick anger; and you shall, you know not why, be cool, as you have, you know not why, been warm.

[*Myrtle makes an unjust reflection on Indiana.*]

Bev. You have touched me beyond the patience of a man, and I'm excusable in the guard of innocence, (or from the infirmity of human nature, which can bear no more,) to accept your invitation, and observe your letter. Sir, I attend you.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Did you call, sir? I thought you did. I heard you speak aloud.

Bev. Yes; go call a coach.

Tom. Sir—master—Mr. Myrtle—friends—gentlemen, what d'ye mean, I am but a servant, or——

Bev. Call a coach. [*Exit Tom.*]

[*A long pause, walking sullenly by each other.*]

Aside.] Shall I (though provok'd to the uttermost) recover myself at the entrance of a third person, and that my servant too, and not have respect enough to all I have ever been receiving from infancy—the obligations to the best of fathers, to an unhappy virgin too, whose life depends on mine. [*Shutting the door.*

To Myrtle.) I have, thank Heaven, had time to recollect myself, and shall not, for fear of what such a rash man as you think of me, keep longer unexplained the false appearances under which your infirmity makes you suffer; when, perhaps, too much regard to a false point of honour makes me prolong that suffering.

Myrt. I am sure, Mr. Bevil cannot doubt but I had

rather have satisfaction from his innocence than his hand.

Bev. Why then would you ask it first that way?

Myrt. Consider you kept your temper yourself no longer than till I spoke to the disadvantage of her you loved.

[*Bevil makes the explanation.*]

Myrt. With what a superiority has he turned the injury on me as the aggressor? I begin to fear I have been too far transported. With what face can I see my benefactor—my advocate—whom I have treated like a betrayer? Oh! Bevil, with what words shall I——

Bev. There needs none: to convince is much more than to conquer.

Myrt. But can you——

Bev. You have overpaid the inquietude you gave me in the change I see in you towards me. Alas! what machines are we! Thy face is altered to that of another man—to that of my companion, my friend.

Myrt. That I could be such a precipitate wretch!

Bev. Pray, no more.

Myrt. Let me now reflect how many friends have died by the hands of friends for want of temper; and you must give me leave to say, again and again, how much I am beholden to that superior spirit you have subdued me with. What would become of one of us, or perhaps both, had you been as weak as I was, and as incapable of reason?

Bev. I congratulate to us both the escape from ourselves, and hope the memory of it will make us dearer friends than ever.

Myrt. Dear Bevil, your friendly conduct has convinced me that there is nothing manly, but what is conducted by reason, and agreeable to the practice of virtue and justice. And yet, how many have been sacrificed to that idol, the unreasonable opinion of man! Nay, they are so ridiculous in it, that they often use their swords against each other with dissembled anger and real fear.

Betrayed by honour, and compelled by shame,

They hazard being, to preserve a name;

Nor dare inquire into the dread mistake,

Till plunged in sad eternity they wake. [*Exeunt*]

DR. SAMUEL MADDEN.

BORN 1686—DIED 1765.

DR. MADDEN was born in 1686. He was educated in Dublin, and resided here the greater part of his life. Being in London in 1729, he was tempted, by the offer of a noble study of books from the profit of it, to permit his tragedy of "*Themistocles*" to be brought out. It was acted, with considerable success, at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, in that year. In 1732 he published "*Memoirs of the Twentieth Century*"—a book which for some reason, now unknown, was totally suppressed in a few days. In 1740 we find him again in Dublin, setting apart the sum of one hundred pounds, to be distributed in premiums for the encouragement of arts, manufactures, and science; and the same sum he continued to bestow every year while he lived. His exertions were not only beneficial to this country, but extended to England, having given rise to the Society of Arts and Sciences in London. In an oration spoken at Dublin, December 6, 1757, by Mr. Sheridan, the speaker took occasion to mention Dr. Madden's bounty, and designed to have proceeded in the following manner, but was prevented by observing that Dr. Madden was present. Speaking of the admirable institutions of premiums, he intended to

have gone on thus: "Whose author, had he never contributed anything further to the good of his country, would have deserved immortal honour, and must have been held in reverence by latest posterity. But the unwearied and disinterested endeavours during a long course of years, of this truly good man, to promote industry, and consequently the welfare of this kingdom, and the mighty benefits which have thence resulted to the community, have made many of the good people of Ireland say, that a long-talked-of scheme has not hitherto been put in execution, that we might not appear inferior in point of gratitude to the citizens of London with respect to a fellow-citizen,* (surely not with more reason,) and that, like them, we might be able to address our patriot, *Præsenti tibi maturos largimur honores.*" Dr. Madden was possessed of some church preferment in Ireland, and died the 30th of December, 1765. Besides "*Themistocles*," he wrote another tragedy, which he left as a legacy to Mr. Sheridan; it has never been published.†

SCENE FROM "THEMISTOCLES."

[Though prefaces are very idle things to performances of this kind, yet I find myself under a necessity of saying something here, both that I may return my thanks to the town for the favourable, the very favourable reception this piece has met with; and also to give some short account, with all sincerity and candour, as to the occasion of its writing and publishing. Having always maintained (tho' seldom with success) that the stage might, under proper regulations, be made subservient to the propagating the noblest sentiments and the greatest virtue among our people; and having, many years since, observed

* Sir John Barnard.

† Biographia Dramatica.

something very great and exalted in the character of THEMISTOCLES, and his rival ARISTIDES, I took a resolution of bringing them together in the manner I have done, merely for my own amusement in the country, and to justify what I had so often asserted. It was finished in a much shorter time than is proper to mention, and lay by me longer, and more entirely neglected, and forgotten than is usual, I believe in such writings; till happening to show it to a friend, who thought better of it than it deserved, he tempted me to let it come out by the offer of a considerable study of books, out of the profits of it, and to satisfy my disinclination to appear in such an affair, by transacting every thing under his cover. This was accordingly agreed to, and the copy lodged with Mr. Rich, when the death of my friend, made it absolutely necessary for me, so far to appear in it, as not to let it be ruined by my own neglect, or others' mismanagement, since there was no avoiding its coming into the world.—*From the Preface to the Dublin Ed. 1729.*]

ACT III.—SCENE I.

Enter Aristides disguised in a slave's habit ; and Demaratus.

Dem. Whoe'er thou art, whose habit speaks a slave,
Thy words confess the free-born *Grecian* spirit,
Wrestling with fate, and keeping far at bay
The woes that would oppress thee—yet be told,
Now to converse in secret with Themistocles,
When, at the royal feast, he sits on high,
Is a request would be refus'd to princes.

Arist. Be 't so: I see your princes live and act
The slaves of force, and all-oppressing power;
But know, a *Greek*, tho' dragg'd to chains indignant,
Still dares exert the empire of his soul,
And owns no power but the laws and reason.
Yet once again be told, were I as low
As fate, or the mean fears of fate could lay me,
I bring a message of such high concernment,
That were he now in council with the gods,
Dividing out the empires of the world,
He might lay by his state, and give me audience.

Dem. Thy words are hid in clouds, and like the voice
Of Jove, when heav'n is mov'd, and the earth shaken;
Thunder amidst the darkness—speak, unfold them.

Arist. Let it suffice to know, that what I bring,
Suits only him to hear and me to speak;
Which bid him haste, and learn—if he neglects
The summons, I can only lose these moments,

Mispent with thee, and a few honest prayers ;
The gods may find some better way to answer.

Dem. Thy sternness looks like virtue—wait a while
And I shall bring him, whose wide reach of thought
Shall fathom all thy depths— [Exit Demaratus.

Arist. 'Tis fix'd ! ye Fates, this hour I shall learn
How far the just and upright views of virtue
May dare to hope your favours.—Righteous Powers,
Ye guardians of my country's fate, bespeed,
And guide me, while I tread these dangerous paths ;
And oh, if ever Aristides fought
Your cause, the cause of truth and virtue here,
Prosper him now, and let my words pierce thro'
The proud, the swelling heart of this Themistocles ;
That, like some sore, lanc'd by the Leech's hand,
It may disgorge the venom lodg'd within.
'Tis true, he holds me his determined foe ;
But, if his hate extend not past the grave,
With joy my blood shall seal the peace of Athens,
A trivial price ! for what is life, ye Powers,
If Greece be conquer'd, and her sons enslav'd ?

Enter Themistocles and Demaratus.

Them. What art thou ? that hast dar'd, with busy
zeal,
To interrupt the public joys and mine ?
Are there not hours enough in life for care,
That this great sabbath of my soul must lose
Its privilege of peace ?—knowest thou, this day
I pay to joy—to morrow to revenge,
The business of the world, Revenge and Glory ?

Arist. I know it well ; and therefore am I come,
Like thy good genius, watchful of thy fate,
To wake thy soul, which, on the steepy precipice
Of thy high fortune, sleeps supine, and haply
May, dizzied with the giddy heights thou'st gained,
Fall down, thy fame, thine honour lost for ever.

Them. Say'st thou ? Speak out—thou shalt be answered nobly.

Arist. I cannot, till we're private.

Them. Fear not—this man is as myself—my friend,
Long tried and known : my better half of soul.

Arist. The less I care to trust him—I've to speak
What will demand thy most abstracted soul,
And claim the Gods, and thee, sole auditors.

Them. And we will hear thee fully—leave me with
him.

Dem. Think better on't—This may be some assassin,
Desperate, and arm'd against your life.

Them. Be 't so—I see no hosts he brings to aid him,
He's but a man, and has a man to cope with:
Leave us alone.—And know, when I can fear
Ought but the Gods, I am no more *Themistocles*.

[*Exit Demeratus.*]

Now speak—unfold thyself, and thy high business.
Whose slave art thou?

Arist. It matters not: but know, whate'er I am,
I am no slave to *Persia*, like *Themistocles*:
No slave to *Xerxes*, and oppressive Tyranny:
I have not sold myself to the base views
Of foul ambition, and the thirst of power;
And tho' I wear these servile marks of bondage,
I'm free, and own no other lord on earth,
But Reason, and the Gods, from whom I hold it.

Them. What means this daring preface? Wretch,
what wouldst thou?

Arist. I would be what I was, and hope to die,
A free-born *Grecian*, born to act and think,
As suits the noble being of a man.
I would that thou shouldst dare to be *Themistocles*—
To be thyself! to reassume thy reason,
And wear that high-raised name, which grac'd thee once.
The boast! the prop! the friend of thy brave country!
But O, vain hope! thy power, thy pride, thy passions,
Are all in arms against me—yet I come
With truth, with reason, and the Gods to friend,
To take a nearer prospect of thy soul,
And boldly lay great Athens' wrongs before thee.

Them. Rush not upon thy death—my hand is arm'd.
[*Half drawing.*]

Arist. True, with thy sword—but I am armed with
innocence,
Less penetrable than steel-ribbed coats,
That harness round thy warriors—O *Themistocles*,

Thy sword is blunt, and thy strong arm is sinewless
 To souls like mine, who in an honest death
 Behold no terrors like a guilty life,
 Blotted with wrongs, injustice, and oppression,
 Daring and great as thine—

Them. Vile wretch! behold how calm the guiltless soul
 Can smile at malice—be my scorn thy safety:
 Thou'st learnt among thy free-born *Greeks* to think
 Slander and envy are the patriot's virtues;
 Therefore bark on! rail! name that act, that thing
 Which can attain my fame with such dishonours.

Arist. I will—Think of that field besmear'd with blood,
 When thy fell sword loaded the Egyptian plain
 With the red carnage of the vanquished *Greeks*,
 Thy murder'd brethren.—Think! recall the hour,
 When choked with gore, and gashed with gaping wounds,
 They cry'd in vain, *Themistocles* have mercy!
 Save, save thy kindred tribes, and stop the slaughter!

Them. Slanderer, 'tis false, most false! my pierced heart
 Bled at their cries, and my fond eyes pour'd tears,
 Fast as their wounds stream'd blood—Thro' the mix'd
 hosts

I rush'd, I flew, and sav'd the lives of thousands.

Aris. Yes, to reserve them for new woes, new injuries,
 To lead them boastful to adorn thy triumphs,
 And shew thy *Persian* slaves, a sight, before
 Unknown, the *Grecians* chain'd and bound—O Heavens!
 Where slept that day the soul of this *Themistocles*,
 That mercy could not wake it! Lo, these bonds
 [Shakes his chains.]

That rattle in thine ears: 'tis thou hast tied them:
 Are these the due rewards of all my toils,
 For fighting for my country in the field?
 For our dear native soil, the land of liberty:
 For *Greece*, the favourite nation of the Gods?
 When, like a robber, thou o'ermatched our strength,
 And tore my dearest wealth, my freedom, from me!

Them. If that were guilt, that guilt is wiped away,
 Since he, who tied those bonds, did loose them too,
 Pitied your sufferings, and restored your freedom.

Arist. At last you did so—true—but on such terms,
 That I am come to render back thy gifts,

And tell thee I prefer my chains before them.
 Thinkest thou, *Themistocles*, thy unjust shackles
 Can bow a *Grecian* soul to stoop so low,
 To guard thy tyrant's standards: to unloose
 The everlasting bonds that ought to tie
 The brave man to his country, to his conscience?
 To hire him, with his freedom, to embrace
 The slav'ry of hell: and like the fiends,
 Condemn'd to all the stings of horrid guilt,
 Wage savage conflict and unnatural war
 E'en with that Power, whence they deriv'd their being!
 Ah, no; such terms disgrace the gen'rous views,
 For which, alone, *Grecians* are wont to live,
 Or bravely choose to die——

The. Go, get thee hence—begone.—The serpent's
 tongue

Hath with its venom pierced my heart, and thrill'd
 The boiling flood that warm'd it. [*Aside*]—Have done—
 away—

My sword hath drunk too deep of *Grecian* blood,
 Why should it blush with thine?

Arist. Because I am thy country's steadfast friend,
 And ever wish'd destruction to her foes.

And, therefore, most to thee—nay, more, because
 I'll turn a traitor for the bribes you promis'd,
 And place within thy power, thy stubborn foe:
 This hated *Aristides*. [*Throws off his disguise.*]

[The entire scene is too long for extraction. *Themistocles* is at first moved to revenge by the appearance of his enemy, but is awed and disarmed at witnessing the calmness of *Aristides*. As he thinks of Athens he becomes affected, and when he is presented with the parchment which contains the rescinding of his banishment, his first impulse is to fly with *Aristides*, to the defence of his country. Gratitude, however, to Xerxes restrains him, and it is finally arranged that *Aristides* should appear before the king as an ambassador, demanding peace for Athens. *Themistocles* and his daughter *Nesiptolema* to assist the prayer of *Aristides* by their influence.]

THOMAS PARNELL.

BORN 1679—DIED 1717.

THE life of Parnell is a task, says Dr. Johnson, which I should very willingly decline, since it has been written by Goldsmith, a man of such variety of powers, and such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best, that which he was doing; a man whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness. What such an author has told, who would tell again?

Thomas Parnell was born in Dublin, in 1679, and received his early education at the school of Dr. Jones, in that city. He entered Trinity College when only thirteen years of age. His progress, says Goldsmith, through the college course of study, was probably marked with but little splendour: his imagination might have been too warm for the cold logic of Burgerdicius, or the dreary subtleties of Smiglesius; but it is certain, that as a classical scholar, few could equal him. His own compositions shew this, and the deference which the most eminent men paid him upon that head, put it beyond a doubt. He was admitted to the degree of M.A. July 9, 1700. In 1703 he entered into holy orders, in the church of England, and was appointed to the Archdeaconry of Clogher, in 1705.

About the same time, he married the lady to whom his song, "My days have been so wondrous free," was written. He was exceedingly attached to her, and her premature death, it is believed, accelerated his own. Parnell was the intimate friend of Addison, Steele, Congreve, Pope, Gay, Arbuthnot, and Swift. It was on the recommendation of Swift that he was appointed in 1713 to the vicarage of Finglass. He died at Chester, on his way to Ireland, in July, 1717, in the 38th year of his age, and was buried in Trinity Church, in that city. Parnell was a man of great benevolence and of very agreeable manners. Goldsmith says, he was the most capable man in the world to make the happiness of those he conversed with and least able to secure his own. He wanted that evenness of disposition which bears disappointment with phlegm, and joy with indifference. He was ever much elated or depressed, and his whole life spent in agony or rapture. Parnell is ever happy (says the same delightful writer) in the selection of his images, and singularly careful in the choice of his subjects. His poetical language is not less correct than his subjects are pleasing. He has considered the language of poetry as the language of life, and conveys the warmest thoughts in the simplest expressions.

ANACREONTIC.

[The most popular of his poems is the HERMIT, the story of which Goldsmith supposes to have been originally Arabian. The object of the poem deserves high praise for its piety and conduciveness to hu-

man happiness. And it is conspicuous for beautiful descriptive narrative.—The ANACREONTIC is less known; it is taken from the French, but superior to the original. The imagery is beautiful, and the sentiments natural and pleasing.]

When spring came on with fresh delight,
To cheer the soul and charm the sight,
While easy breezes, softer rain,
And warmer suns, salute the plain;
'Twas then, in yonder piny grove,
That Nature went to meet with Love.

Green was her robe, and green her wreath,
Where'er she trod, 'twas green beneath;
Where'er she turn'd, the pulses beat
With new recruits of genial heat;
And in her train the birds appear,
To match for all the coming year.

Rais'd on a bank where daisies grew,
And violets intermixed a blue,
She finds the boy she went to find;
A thousand pleasures wait behind,
Aside, a thousand arrows lie,
But all unfeather'd, wait to fly.

When they met, the dame and boy,
Dancing graces, idle joy,
Wanton smiles, and airy play
Conspir'd to make the scene be gay;
Love pair'd the birds through all the grove,
And Nature bid them sing to love,
Sitting, hopping, fluttering, sing,
And pay their tribute from the wing,
To fledge the shafts that idly lie,
And yet unfeather'd wait to fly.

'Tis thus when spring renews the blood,
They meet in every trembling wood,
And thrice they make the plumes agree,
And every dart they mount with three,
And every dart can boast a kind,
Which suits each proper turn of mind.

From the towering eagle's plume,
The generous hearts accept their doom;
Shot by the peacock's painted eye,
The vain and airy lovers die;

For careful dames and frugal men,
 The shafts are speckled by the hen ;
 The pyes and parrots deck the darts,
 When prattling wins the panting hearts ;
 When from the voice the passions spring,
 The warbling finch affords a wing ;
 Together, by the sparrow stung,
 Down fall the wanton and the young ;
 And fledg'd by geese the weapons fly,
 When others love they know not why.

All this (as late I chanc'd to rove)
 I learn'd in yonder waving grove :
 And see, says Love, who call'd me near,
 How much I deal with Nature here ;
 How both support a proper part,
 She gives the feather, I the dart ;
 Then cease for souls averse to sigh,
 If Nature cross you, so do I ;
 My weapon then unfeather'd plies,
 And shakes and shuffles through the skies ;
 But if the mutual charms I find,
 By which she links you mind to mind,
 They wing my shafts, I prize the darts,
 And strike from both, through both your hearts.

[The following song was addressed to the lady whom Parnell afterwards married. This, as well as another, Goldsmith has characterised as being the genuine dictates of his passion, but which are not excellent in their kind.]

S O N G.

LOVE AND INNOCENCE.

My days have been so wondrous free,
 The little birds that fly
 With careless ease from tree to tree,
 Were but as bless'd as I.

Ask gliding waters if a tear
 Of mine increas'd their stream ?
 Or ask the flying gales, if e'er
 I lent one sigh to them ?

But now my former days retire,
And I'm by beauty caught,
The tender chains of sweet desire
Are fix'd upon my thought.

Ye nightingales, ye twisting pines !
Ye swains that haunt the grove !
Ye gentle echoes, breezy winds !
Ye close retreats of love !

While all of nature, all of art,
Assist the dear design :
O teach a young, unpractis'd heart,
To make fair Nancy mine.

The very thoughts of change I hate,
As much as of despair :
Nor ever covet to be great,
Unless it be for her.

'Tis true, the passion in my mind
Is mixt with soft distress :
Yet, while the fair I love is kind,
I cannot wish it less.

END OF VOL. I.

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M'Carthy, Denis Florence

The poets and dramatists of Ireland With an introduction on the early
religion and literature of the irish people. V. 1

Dublin 1846

P.o.angl. 212 q

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10747500-3